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OUR POINT OF VIEW

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NORTH SCOTT JUNIOR HIGH

Welcome to Our Point of View. Most of the works you will find on these pages were written during Language Arts writing lab. Several of our authors have been published this year in The High School Writer, Junior High Edition, The American Anthology of Poetry, and elsewhere. Others have entered contests and have received recognition for their excellent writing.

We hope you enjoy our compiled efforts.

The Seventh and Eighth Grade
Language Arts Classes
Students and Teachers

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P R A C T I C E

I dedicate this story to practice -
because if you do you may become someone very good someday.

Bob wanted to be great in sports. He was a little smaller than everyone and didn't really have many friends. He had brown hair and brown eyes. In the summer he didn't have much to do so he shot baskets, because, since he loved the sport, didn't have many friends to do things with and wasn't as good as the other kids in basketball, he shot, and shot, and shot. He could hit just about everything.

He lived in Chicago and as he was walking in his neighborhood a bunch of kids asked him to play a game of one on one. Bob didn't look like a tall basketball player which is why they asked him to play. They wanted to beat him real bad to make him look terrible. Bob wanted to beat those bigger guys to make them look bad. It would be hard because they were so much taller.

Finally they started. Bob didn't know how physical it would get. He tried to bump them around and it was just no match. Bob got beat bad. The score was 10 to 3 against one man and 10 to 5 against another.

That night he went home and practiced some more. He felt so sad because he was beat. He thought, if I could be that big, and that good, I could become good friends with those guys. He thought, one of these days, I will grow and since I can't grow tall right away, I will lift weights to become stronger than those guys. I will still have to shoot to keep my ability up.

Two months later, he walked down the streets, hoping they would be playing basketball and ask him to play again.

One day they did. Bob started with the ball. They played by ones so the regular 3 point field goals would count as two.

cont. -

He dribbled between his legs, behind his back to pull up and shoot a jumpshot. He made it. He just wanted to keep the lead. After halfway through the game, Bob was ahead 6 to 5. He just stole it and shot a two pointer and made it. The ball bounced back to tie the score 9 to 9. Bobby was nervous and so was the other kid. Bobby dribbled around but couldn't get open to shoot. Bumping and pushing his way to the hoop for a lay in. Bobby had beat one of the best players in his grade. The score was 10 to 9.

After that game, the kid became his friend and said, "Come on over tomorrow and we'll play some more. You surprissed me. You must have practiced. GOOD GAME!"

by Joe Osterberg

The Four Seasons

The four seasons are all so beautiful in many ways
In the fall, as the tree branch sways
In the winter, when the snow falls for many days
In the spring, when a child plays
In the summer, getting burnt from sun rays
You see, the year is like a four leaf clover, it has four seasons and it just starts over
When fall arrives, we know Thanksgiving is almost here
When winter is here, that means Christmas is near
When spring comes, the roads are clear
When summer is back again, also the sun is here
Isn't it clear why all the seasons are so wonderful

Elisha Reed

FOOTBALL

I think that football is a sport of determination and talent. I think this because this is what I need to be successful at football. Some of my goals in football are to have an average of three sacks a game and to have my team have a better record than we had this year. When I get out of high school, I want to go to Notre Dame and be a starting line-backer and have the most tackles in the history of Notre Dame. If I want to fulfill this goal, I will have to maintain a B average during my high school years. I also want to have a happy family of two kids- one boy and one girl. I also wish to have three Huskies and a loving wife.

Mike Dugan

Grandma's House

Thanksgiving is the best time
for me
I go to grandma's for turkey
and corn
and potatoes
and cranberry sauce
and best of all her homemade
rolls
that we all love to eat at
the table
after we eat we listen to
stories that the men love to tell
everyone laughs at the really
funny ones and some make you cry
then we say our goodbyes
which is always so hard and remember
the fun we had on the car ride home.

Kathy Vens

Mall Madness

There I was, standing wide-eyed and alone in a building full of strangers. I was struggling uselessly to stay calm, but panic was rising up on me like a tidal wave. People's faces were peering at me strangely, and it seemed that every pair of eyes were pointed in my direction. I wanted to scream at all of them to help me, but the words wouldn't come. I felt like I was in a dream. This couldn't be happening to me! I started to walk slowly forward, but soon I was at a full sprint. I was dodging people at every turn, knocking down bags and tripping over people. Soon my energy dwindled and I was exhausted. I found a bench and sat down.

"What am I going to do?" I thought quietly. I didn't know anybody here besides my mother. I just had to find her. I was trying to think of a play when I remembered the instructions my mom gave me on being lost.

"Stay where you are, or find a policeman."

Frantically, I looked around for a man in the distinctive blue suit. All of a sudden a strange man came up to me and asked me if I wanted some candy. I started to say yes when I remembered my best friend Susan telling me a story about how to say NO to strangers. I turned on my heel and started to walk away when he grabbed my arm! I screamed louder than I've ever screamed before, but he pretended to be my dad and the onlookers turned away. I struggled frantically but his grip

cont. -

remained firm. He told me to shut up and follow him, or I'd never see my family again. I followed along quietly, afraid of what he would do to me. We were getting nearer to the exit of the mall. I had to do something, and do it fast! I brought my foot down hard on his left foot and bit his wrist with my brand new front teeth. He yelped in pain and slackened his grip. That was all the headway I needed! I was off like a flash! I ran my hardest till I got to the center of the mall. There dressed in pleated blue slacks and a blue shirt was the most handsome man I have ever seen. A policeman. My dreams come true! I ran over to him and breathlessly blurted out my story.

Meanwhile my captor was getting away. The policeman took off after him, and they came together in a screeching tackle. The policeman put cuffs on him and took him away for questioning, and once again I was alone. Suddenly I heard someone calling me. I turned around and ran right into my mom. I ran into her arms and hugged her as tight as I could! I told her the whole story, and she was totally flabbergasted! We then drove to the police station and asked what had been done with the man who had tried to kidnap me. They said he confessed to the whole thing and would be going for his sentencing trial soon. I was so relieved. Talk about mall madness.

Jill Nebel

I Wish Poem

I wish there could be
peace
love
and
clean air,
Yet the price for peace is war,
and the price for love is hate,
and the cost for clean air is
arguing and protests,
so I guess my wish is really for:
war,
hate
and
arguing
is that really what I wish?

by Amanda Spies

Hunting

Hunting is my favorite pastime because I love to be in the outdoors. I hunt with my dad and sometimes my cousins will come out to my house and come along. My favorite type of hunting is deer hunting. When we go deer hunting, a lot of my cousins and a couple of my dad's friends will go along. Deer hunting is a fun time because you get to shoot at big game instead of the regular game.

One of the other types of hunting that I do is coon hunting. Coon hunting is very different from some of the other types of hunting. When you go coon hunting, you hunt in the dark at night. One good thing about coon hunting is that you have dogs that are supposed to put the coon up a tree so that you can shoot them out of the tree. This is a lot easier than trying to shoot a rabbit that is running on the ground. I have two dogs that are coon hounds, these dogs are very good at treeing the coon, but when it comes to tracking the coon, the dogs could use a little work. You have to know your dog and how he barks because sometimes the dogs will get pretty far out and their barks are very faint. Another reason that you have to know what your dog sounds is when the dog is tracking a coon, he has a different bark than when the dog is tree barking. If you do not know your dog sounds, then you will probably lose the dog or not get very many coons.

For coon hunting you need some warm clothes because you never know how long you are going to be out in the timber.

cont. -

Sometimes it gets cold out in the timber during the night. I have a coat that is a carhart coat which is warm and stands up to all kinds of brush and thorns. I also have a pair of carhart pants. For spotting the coons that the dog trees, we use some wheat lights that we order from a night lite magazine. The lights are almost like the lights that miners wear.

Hunting is the best experience that I have ever had because you get to be by yourself, and get time to think about what you want to think about. I think that hunting has instilled in me a lot of knowledge about guns. In knowing more about guns, I know what guns can do to people and would never mess around with them.

Curt Engler

I WISH POEM

If I had a wish . . .
the grass would be green,
the sky would be blue,
and the streams would be clean.
There'd be lots of trees
with pretty leaves.
There'd be no noise
of girls and boys
fighting about their toys.
Only the birds
singing a song
and the girls and boys
humming along.

by Meghan Guss

I Wish

I wish many things.
So many things, they're hard to explain.
I know if I want these things, I must believe anything is possible to wish.

by Allysa Holle

Southwestern Iowa

There is a place down south, just west of a little town named Hopkins in Iowa that is the best darn hunting spot you've ever seen.

You could shoot yourself a limit in pheasants as fast as you could say, "Hey, we're going to have good supper today."

This place has changed a lot and it ain't what it used to be.

It would now take a day or so to get your limit and you would have to have at least five people to get any pheasants at all.

I suppose that's why I haven't been there for years.

There isn't so much cover for the birds like there used to be and lots of the old farmers died or moved. That means there is no corn for them to eat.

I think the only reason we used to go down there is to see our old relatives that lived in Hopkins. They are probably extinct by now.

Their names were Martha and Orville. I'm not sure how they were related to us; I think they were my second aunt and uncle.

Even though we don't go to Hopkins anymore, we still hunt pheasants right around here.

Joe Sleep

Autumn

Autumn is warm and cold
and all of us are different
some of us are hanging
and some of us are on the ground
walked on
sat on
raked up into a pile
then people jump into us.
Did they ever think that we might not like
that?
How would they like us jumping on them?
It's like a slow process of dying.
Rumor has it that soom we'll crumple up and
die after all this torture
then come next spring
our relatives will grow in.
I sure hope that horrible rumor is not true
and if it's not I'll tell you more . . .

Holly Nielsen

Goodbye

He doesn't look at me the same way
or tell me that I brighten his day.
Though his heart has changed,
I love him still just the same.

Late at night, deep in slumber
I think of us and begin to wonder
What could we have had? I think,
if I had not broken our link.

Our bond was strong, until that moment,
when away he threw all the love I had spent.
I loved him so, and I still do,
if only he'd listen, he'd hear something new.

I'm sorry, I say again, and again,
but what use is it? He's not even my friend.
We should be together forever and ever
I in his arms, for he is my lover.

This dream of happiness I hold close to me
for what else is there, or to be?
I love him more than I should,
because I know what is good.

I just wanted him to know
how I felt before I go.
Yes, I am leaving,
a part of me is grieving.
But it is better this way.

Shannon Tubb

Disappointment

I should not care any longer, but I do.
It's too hard not to be sad
when all you've ever wished for is through.
My greatest dream of happiness, turned to dust
all my love for him is thrown away
while my poor soul is crushed.
My feelings thrown into the fires of Hell
to be burnt up without a thought
and even through all of this, still I love him, just as well

But what does he care how I feel
even if all of my true love is real?
I know that he's no longer the same
so what? I say, doesn't everyone change?
Not in this way, as far as I can see.
But who am I to tell what's to be?
I'd just like him to know
that I don't like the way we are, so
could we give it one more chance
because I feel as if my heart's been
driven through by a lance

I have but one more thing to say
before you forget me for the day.
I'd only like to tell you, I love you
and like that, forever, it will stay.

by Shannon Tubb

BASKETBALL

Tony was a very good player, but his family was very poor and could not afford shoes or anything else. Also he had to work to help support his family. He knew that the coach required hightops. If he could just get the shoes, he could make the team. He got so obsessed with getting those shoes, he went looking for another job. He fould one but he would have to skip school to be on time. He thought to himself, "I'll just work for a week."

After one week of skipping school, he made enough money for shoes and a new pair of shorts. But he still had to figure out how he could go to practices and still work. He decided that he would quit his after school job and keep skipping school for his other job. The only problem he had was that he had to keep it secret. He practiced and practiced and finally got a starting spot on the team. By this time the coach and the counselors were bugging him about why he was not coming to school. He said that his dad was sick and he would be coming back soon.

It was 5:00 and he was sitting at the school waiting for the game because he wouldn't go home or his dad would know he quit his after school job. He was so nervous that he was shaking. He only wished his dad could see him play on a real team against a real opponent. Right then his dad walked in. He couldn't believe it, what was he doing here? He walked up and said, "Son, get in the car." On the way home his dad said

that basketball is an after school activity. It comes after school. His dad let him play, but he had to work on weekends and go back to school. Then his dad turned around and went back to the school. On the way there he asked his dad if he was going to stay and watch the game.

His dad said, "I wouldn't miss it for the world."

Tony scored 22 points and had 4 rebounds. They won the game 96 to 84. They went undefeated that year and won the state championship. Tony was the star player and his dad was at every game.

Dylan Seifert

MY UNCLE

My uncle Dean is special to me because he is funny. Dean makes jokes about my mom that everybody laughs at. And my mom doesn't really care. Later she makes jokes about him. He is nice because he gives me rides in his cars, and he takes me to a lot of places and does things with me. He can be dangerous at times, because he drives too fast, and he squeals the tires on his cars. That doesn't really bother me. He really enjoys life because when he tells jokes, everybody listens to him when he is talking. Everybody laughs at Dean's jokes.

by David Conner

My Birfday

Next week is my day, MY DAY!!! Do you know what my day is? Give up? It's my birfday! It is going to be so gweat, ballons, and cake, and PWESENTS! But my Gwamma doesn't think it's about pwesents, she thinks it's about being with your family and being one more year mature. What ever that word means! She is always using big words. When I have birfdays Mommy and Daddy always say I'm a year oder but I don't want to be oder because soon I'll have to stawt pwe-school. I sure hope it ain't too hawd. But I guess it is worf it 'cause of the pwesents. Hopefully I get BoBo the clown. He was at Tommy's party, and he is gweat. He even has a puppy wif him, oh, I hope I get one. I also hope I get a big wed bike. All my fwiends have one and I only have a gween one. I love wed! Wed as a big fwire-twuck. Well, I hope I get weal fwire twuck instead of those small fake ones, but my mom says that it wouldn't fit in the house, but I think that it would. She also says that it is too much money but I also know it isn't 'cause myu dad has a weally neat job, he is a police man! One time I got to go on a job wif him, it is weally neat-o. Well, I don't have anything much more to say today so I will get going, Bye!

Hi! Do you know what day it is? Well it's my birfday and there is a big pwesent for me, I think it is my wed bike, I am not sure. I also heard Mom on the phone and she was asking this person if BoBo was free today, so I also think that he is coming. Oh! My Gwamma just came with a box- it's pwobably a

cont. -

sweater or something like that- it is what she usually gets me. Last year she got me a sweater that said, "I'm a Sesame Stweet Kid"!!! Come on- I pwobably would get beat up if I ever wear it in the neighborhood. Especially at the twee house because there is NO Sesame Stweet fans there. That is a rule. I hope I don't get one of those again. But I pwobably will, I just know it!! Well, I better get going because I don't want to miss my own pawty - Bye!!

Kelly Saunders

"I Wish"

I wish people would
start to understand
people better.

I wish people would,
not judge you for what's
on the outside, but
for what's on the inside.

I wish for all these things
so the world
will become
a better place!

by Jenn Kunch

I Wish Poem

I wish school was out
then I'd be happy, no doubt.
I couldn't run & jump & yell & scream,
& then cool down with chocolate ice cream.
If school were out,
I'd give a cheer,
but for now I'm stuck in class
right here.

by Alyssa Arp

Where Am I?

One day, not too long ago, I was wandering around the farm and saw an ice cream truck stroll by. Then I saw it. Ice cream was leaking out of the back of the truck! I ran to the road to lick up the mixture of vanilla and chocolate ice cream. It was great! I then kept licking it up as I walked along the road. The truck wasn't too far ahead. As I was walking along the road, I heard the barking of the other puppies caling me back, but I didn't listen. I just kept going and going and wouldn't stop. Soon it was getting dark. I began to have a splitting headache, but I don't know what it was from. Maybe I ate the ice cream too fast. I decided to go back, but when I turned around, I no longer knew where the farm was. I began to get frightened. Where am I?

I started to wander around to see if I could find my way back, but it was no use. I was too far out in the country and it was too dark to go any farther. I managed to find a cardboard box and some litter around the road for bedding. I decided it was best for me to sleep there for the night. I could just find my way back in the morning. Soon, I drifted off to sleep after several hours or worrying.

When I woke up, the sun was shining, and everything seemed all right, but when I remembered- I was lost.

Everything came back to me, the ice cream and the terrible headache. I decided to follow the road that I came from. Then I smelled the ice cream and followed the scent. It went a long way, but I didn't care. In the distance, I heard the barking of dogs. THE FARM! I ran all the way back. When I got there, the owner didn't notice I was gone. I'm so glad I made it back. I like it here, playing with the puppies, and helping the farmers with some chores. I love ice cream, but not as much as I love the farm.

Alissa Murphy

"Come Home"

Last night my sister ran away. No one knows why she ran away she just did. It might have been because she and dad got in a fight or because she isn't allowed to do very much. Or maybe its because she got an F on one of her tests and didn't want to tell anyone. I hope she didn't run away because of me.

She is very tall and pretty; she has brown hair, too. Her name is Kristie. She likes to play basketball. She's good at it. I think her height helps. If you live by a basketball court and you think that it is her, please tell her to come home. She also likes going to the mall. She won't be able to buy very much because she left her money at home on her dresser.

I am starting to miss her company. She always talked to me even when she was mad at me. I liked going places with her. I hope she comes back soon so we can find out why she ran away then we can tell each other what is wrong. I really miss her.

The phone just rang. It was one of Kristie's friends. I didn't know what to tell them so I said to call back tomorrow. I wonder if they have any idea where she is. Maybe I should call them back and ask them.

Her birthday is coming up in a week. She should be home before then, but I hope it is before then.

Jaci Peters

The Shoe

I wish he would toss that shoe to me. I really wish he would, I really do. If he does I would play all day. I wouldn't get in the way, I would just play and play, all day. I love to chew, and rip things apart. Once I got hold of a pant leg, and tore a big hole in it. I got yelled at and put outside for the rest of the day, which wasn't so bad, because the sun was shining. My favorite things to chew are shoes, because they don't rip as easy, except for the cheap ones. You grab a hold on the fronts of them and you got two teeth marked holes left in them.

The days are over of tearing up shoes, because now that I'm grown up I don't get the chance. The kids are grown up, too, and not home much. All I do is lay around; I'm pretty good at playing dead. My life was fun as a pup, and now while I'm an adult, I haven't had a whole lot of it. Just the other day I got hold of a worn out shoe and tore it to scraps. It was the most fun I've had in awhile.

Ryan Whipple

I Love You So

It's time for me to go
I am willing to let you go
There's a lot more tears filling inside
I love you so
you're my everything,
you're my life,
you mean so much to me
I love you so
I've cared for you so long,
you cared, too
Please come, you're my every thing
I love you so
You mean so much to me
I would do any thing,
to have you come
I can't live without you
I love you so

Shelley Keppy

NORTH SCOTT REBELS

It all started two years ago in Des Moines, Iowa. We only won one game. Now it is our second season and we are better than last year.

The baseball season started in Rockford, Illinois. Our first game of the year was against the Rockford Hurricaes. It was a scoreless game until the third inning, and they scored eight runs in the bottom of that inning. They called the game due to the rain and gave them the win. We got a no hitter pitched against us that game also. The next game we lost to Palitine 5-1. Our coaches were getting mad at us because we didn't do anything right.

We had lost seven straight games, before we got our first win against the Bettendorf Black Sox. We beat them by five runs. We had a little winning streak going on before we lost our next game.

Our next tournament was in Wilton. It was not that hard of a tournament, but it was fun playing in it. We lost the championship to a team from Durant 14-8. They were one grade ahead of us.

Our next tournament was in Cedar Rapids. Our first game was against the Crush. We had a lead, and we blew it. Then in the last inning we ended up winning by three runs. We won our next two before we lost to the Quad City Mavericks. The next day we played a team called Powertrain. We lost by a base hit. Powertrain ended up winning the tournament.

cont. -

Our next big tournament was in Dubuque. There were some good teams in the tournament. There were some teams from Chicago and there was one team from Milwaukee. Our first game was against the Dubuque Dodgers. We beat them pretty badly. The next game we played against a team from East Dubuque. We lost the game in the bottom of the ninth, by a base hit up the middle. The final score was 6-5. Our coaches said we played a good game.

The next tournament was in LaCrosse, Wisconsin. Our first game was against a team from Madison. We beat them pretty badly. The score was 15-2. We played two more games that day. Our second game was against a team from Minnesota. We lost that game 8-6. The next team we played we should have killed them. We lost 5-4 because of the dark. Our coaches and fans were really mad at the umpires because they called a bad game.

We played a lot of games between that tournament and our last tournament. Our last tournament we held. We had six teams in the tournament. Some of the teams were from the Quad Cities and two teams from Dubuque. We lost the final game 6-5 to Davenport East. Everybody was mad that we lost because we beat them all the time that year.

We ended up never winning a tournament, but we will next year.

Jason Schroeder

Soccer

Soccer is my favorite sport. I am on a team for soccer for the Davenport Family "Y". My happiest moment was when I was in a game last spring. I was playing for St. Croix, an Eldridge team. We played every Saturday, and we practiced on Wednesday at the Junior High. It was on a Saturday playing at 11:00 a.m., we were playing the Mexico team from Davenport. The Referee's whistle blew. The game started. We came up the field. Kyle Krueger had the ball. He passed to me. I passed back. He faked the shot and passed to me. I shot the ball. It went over the goal. I had missed. Mexico took the goal shot. They brought the ball down the field. They were in shooting range. They shot it right at our goalie. Then he punted it up the field at me. I got the ball. I took it all the way up the field. I shot. The goalie had to dive for it. He missed. The whistle blew from the referee, "SCORE"!!! he said. A couple minutes later, the whistle blew. The first quarter ended.

Second quarter was ready to start 1 to 0, St. Croix leading. We kicked off. They were bringing it down. Our fullbacks missed him. They shot and the ball went over our goalie's head. They scored. They tied it 1-1. That is how the game ended.

It went to overtime. This was a great game between the two teams. Overtime lasted 5 minutes. We went in to overtime twice before we finally won. That win made us undefeated!!

The next week we played in the championship game. All I know is, it was a close game. We lost 2-0. We played the team that was undefeated last year and this year. They had one of the best goalies in the league. This is why I like to play soccer. I'll play in the fall, too, this year.

Kent Ganzer

Bobby Jr.

Hi, my name's Bobby Jr. and today is my birthday. Mama said go to bed early last night. I know why. It's cause Papa had to go and buy me a pwesent for my birthday. I told papa to get me a twuck with wed fwashing wights and a fiweman in the fwont seat so we can dwive up and down the staiws without my help. Mama says that toys these days are way too ognoxshus. Papa says, "Everything gets mama mad."

This mowning I got up w e a l eawly cause . . . me . . gonna get . . . that . . . fi . . w . . e . . twuck. Me kwept down the staiws and wooked over the post and . . . . . hey whewe is my fiwe twuck?

Mama says Papa had to go to wook weal eawly so he wont be home til weal late.

I ask mama, "Whewe's my fiwe twuck?"

Mama says, "What in the world is that?"

"You know it's wed, with wheewls, and gose . . . whoooooo. . .whoooooo . . .whoooooo."

"Oh, Bobby, it's not your birthday."

THE END

Rachael Moore

Thanksgiving in Marshia's House

It's time to see the family
on a day with chocolate cake
Blooming Dales, Vanity
shopping time in Hanalie
Marshia says time to eat
no more playing in the street
Mama knows, Papa says
Turkey time tell Lopez.

Rachael Moore

My Response to the People

Sometimes I just don't understand people. I mean we are all in a young adult society now, but still people act like immature people from elementary school. You've got to treat people the way you want to be treated. One thing that concerns me is name calling. I mean why do people do it? I think people do it because they think they are cool. That means they are just a bunch of want-a-be's. People should accept you for who you are not what you look like or how you are built. Everybody is different, and some people can't accept that. (They are mostly the immature people).

I think that the term "popular" is very stupid. I consider everybody popular because there are many different kinds of people, and everybody has a different quality that makes them popular. Most people think that the popular people are only the ones that are pretty or good looking and have a nice body. That's bull. Also, you can't just judge people on their bodies. You've got to know them inside to see if they have the same interests and qualities as you do. Then you will know if you like the person or not. I think what I'm trying to say is before you say something, think about it, would you want someone saying it to you? It's very rude, immature, and unnecessary. Plus if you say it you are hurting other people's feelings just to make the "in crowd" think you're cool. If the "in crowd" was so in, they would know that this person is a want-to-be and doesn't deserve to be "in".

Think about what I'm saying, and, if someone makes fun of you, just ignore it or tell a teacher or parent and think, that person is so immature, wants to be a want-a-be, and thinks he or she is cool. If they keep this up, sooner or later they won't have any friends because everybody would see how much of an immature person he or she is. Just think, later in life you will be more successful, better educated, and have a better life because you didn't waste your time running people down and you were concentrating on your studies.

by Erin Hinz

Chicago

On October 30, many kids went to Chicago on a field trip for school. It took about three and one half hours to get there. We took interstate so we didn't get to see many sights. We had to find things to do so we weren't bored on the bus. We read magazines, ate food, took pictures, and talked.

We finally got to the first museum. They told us to stay in groups of two or more. It was a big place, and it was very easy to get lost. We had maps, but we still got lost. They didn't help us much because they were blurry and hard to read. We saw many displays of things that contribute to space.

At 12:15 we went to the Omnimax theater show. It was called "The Ring of Fire". It seemed as if you were really moving with the picture, but you weren't. My friend fell asleep while we were watching the show. We left the show as soon as it was over.

Next we went to the Field Museum. We stopped at McDonalds's first to eat, then we explored the museum. When it was time to go, we met our chaperone so we could walk in the tunnel to Shedd's Aquarium. This place had many different types of animals that lived in the water.

At 5:00 p.m. we left to go to Edwardo's Pizza. They hired extra help to serve us. We left at 6:30 to go home. Before we left Chicago, we lost the second bus. They didn't make the same turn we did. It took ten minutes to give them directions.

Half way home we stopped to put gas in the bus. Then later that hour we stopped at a rest area. About 10:30 p.m. we stopped to call Eldridge Police Department to have them tell our parents that we would be an hour late.

I enjoyed this trip, learned many things, and still had fun at the same time.

by Amber Hesse

"The Day of a Cat"

My name is Snowball,
I was adopted last fall.
I'm doing quite well,
since the day that I fell.
I was trapped in a hole,
in search of a mole.
My only companion's a hound,
he came from the pound,
I really hate dogs,
but I like to eat frogs!
I'm in search of one now,
I need some chow!
I get up on the road,
and there is a toad.
But then, I feel a rumble,
rocks start to tumble.
I perk up my ears, the sound isn't far,
So I look up, oh, it, is a car . . . .

Frank Lamont

"MY CAT"

I used to have a cat named Snowball,
he stood about two feet tall.
Sometimes he's play with my dog,
and once he even ate my frog.
He usually wouldn't wander far,
Until one day . . . SPLAT! he got hit by a car!

"My Cat the Sequel"

His fur was all tattered,
it's parts were all scattered,
and I thought I would die!
I thought I would barf,
all my dog said was arf.
But now he's up in the sky.

by Frank Lamont

Winter Time

Winter is my favorite time,
It's when you hear the X-Mas chime.

You go sledding down a hill,
And if it's big you'll get a thrill.

It's also time to drink hot co-coa.
And the time to watch falling snow.

But the bad part is shoveling the walk,
The time will go slow if you look at the clock.

But winter is fun; there is alot to do.
It's really fun if you don't catch the flu.

by Kelly Doyle

Christmas Rap

I woke up in the morning and what did I see.
I saw a whole bunch of presents under the tree.
Then I jumped up with glee,
and said "look at all the presents that are for me."
I ran to the tree as fast as I could,
they my brother said, "Look one of mine is made of wood."
I started to open one of mine
and it was a package of fishing line.
I started to open another
and had to hit my brother.
When I was all done,
my mother gave me a big gun.
I rushed to the table so I could eat,
and my grandma said, "Boy, that shirt's neat."
I said, "Breakfast was great."
But I had to wait.
I had to wait till everyone had ate.
When everyone was all done,
I went to have fun.
First I played with G.I.Joe,
then I played Nintendo.
Then I told everyone bye
and let out a big sigh.
When the day was all over,
I went to bed with my dog Grover.

by Chad Schroder

What I Like

I like to play football with my friends and other kids I don't know. The best thing about football is running after the quarterback and smearing him. He fumbles the ball, and I recover it and make a touchdown. Once I had the ball and two sixth graders were right in front of me. I went straight for them, ran into them, knocked them down, and made a touchdown. When I turned around, they were both crying. I thought that I barely hit them.

The other thing I like to do is farming. It is a lot of work but it is very fun and exciting. The thing I like best is milking cows. It is very fun, that is if you lived on a farm before. I help my cousins do their chores. They like it when I'm there because I do much of their work. Last weekend I drove my uncle's truck to his junkyard. I went very fast; I went too fast. Then the kids and I went to the corn field to make a fence. We had to make a substitute fence so we could put cows in it. I had to hold the wire. It was heavy because there was a lot of wire.

When I had a three wheeler, it was fun driving it. I would drive it through the snow when it was a foot deep, but I would get stuck. Then my dad would get a tractor and make a track with a plow. It is fun to drive on the track. That is the end of what I like.

by Terry Kuehl

STORY

Robbie Thompson called the play. It was the play he had been famous for in Jr. High and in his freshman year. The play was the rollout option where he got the ball, and rolled to his left. Then there would be three receivers on the left side to block for him. Robbie would follow behind them and if he got into trouble, he would pitch back to his fullback.

While Robbie was calling the play, his mind wandered to the last time that he had used the play. It was the last game of the season and they were trailing the Northeast Eagles, twenty to twenty-one. Robbie had just thrown a touchdown pass to his longtime friend and receiver Rich Carmical. There was just enough time to run a two point conversion. Fillmore High went into the huddle, "All right, guys, this is for the game. Let's do Wing One, my play, on two," Robbie said.

Edmond and Livingston lined up on the left side along with Carmical.

"Hut one, hut two."

The center snapped the ball to Robbie, and he took off down the field. Out of the corner of his eyes, Robbie saw the defense closing in. As he crossed the goal line, he was hammered from both sides. The tacklers got up, but Robbie didn't.

Robbie didn't play football again until his junior year. He had broken three ribs.

"Robbie, snap out of it," Rich Carmical said quickly, "We have only got twenty-five seconds to get out of the huddle."

Robbie drowned the memory out of his mind and trotted back to his position. He received the ball from the center and took off down the field with his wall of blockers. Robbie didn't need to use his fullback. He ran it alone for eighty yards and his first touchdown in two years.

As he was jogging back to the bench, he said to himself, "It's good to be back."

by Mike Edfors

5 Sense Poem

Life is black.
It sounds like death dying.
It tastes like fungus among us.
And smells like raw sewage
It makes you want to cry.

by Derek Blackman

Abuse . . .

Abuse is black and blue
Feels like bottles slamming together.
Sounds like windows shattering.
Tastes like bed bugs
It smells like hot skin.

by Stacy Wade

I O W A

Beautiful, Flat
Growing, Prospering, Changing,
Always giving life.
A great place to be.

by Bryan Hammes

Color Poem

Green is the color of grass
on a cool summer's eve.
Green is the color of
a shamrock
on March 17th.
Green is the color of an Emerald
on a bed of gold,
Green is the color
of a rose stem
on a soldier's tomb.

by Bryan Hammes

If I Were 1 Inch Tall

If I were 1 inch tall
I would be so very small
I would fit under a door,
or fall through a slit in the floor.
If I were 1 inch tall.

If I were 1 inch tall
I would have my own law.
No one to push me around or tell me what to do,
That sounds so good my lips are turning blue.
If I were 1 inch tall.

If I were 1 inch tall
I would be the king of 'em all.
From as small as a millimeter to as big as a decimeter,
they'd bow down for a kilometer.
If I were 1 inch tall.

If I were 1 inch tall,
America's problems - I'd solve 'em all.
They would give me a problem and I would say,
"This is no problem, this will be an easy day."
If I were 1 inch tall.

If I were 1 inch tall
The biggest problems wouldn't be America's problems at all.
The biggest feat would definitely be crossing the street
If I were 1 inch tall.

by Bryan Hammes

Blue

Blue is a lake
Cool and clean.
Blue is feeling sad,
Someone was mean,
Blue is a jaybird
Flying so high.
Blue is the color
Of the summer sky.
Blue is my jeans,
In all sizes,
Blue is a ribbon
For first prizes.
Blue is someone's eyes,
Also green, brown, and gray.
Blue is the flag waving
On a holiday.
Blue is a blueberry pie,
Blue is a stripe on Dad's necktie.
Blue is the color of a pen's ink.
Blue's a great color, don't you think.

by Anne Tubbs

You Are to Me . . .

You are to me . . . Rain
in the midst of a drought.

Cotton candy, instead
of sauerkraut.

You are the mornings
dew,

So refreshing, beautiful,
and new.

To me you're everything I
need,

So I can live my life
like a growing seed.

by Jennifer Kunch

Rain

As lighting strikes the
rich layers of the Earth,

The clouds shift in a
busy maze.

Thunder sends children
running in a daze.

Spit! Spit!
here comes the
rain, and the
cold feelings again.

by Jennifer Kunch

DOLPHIN

Swimmers take your mark get set go
BANG
Splash

I am a dolphin
I can feel my fins through the ocean
My head out of the water
My sonic ears hear my friends
No one else but me and the current
It feels as if I'm being chased by a shark
CHOMP
Missed

I am the dolphin
With a blue ribbon
in my transformed hands

by April Ricketts

The Land of 101 Mermaids

One dull foggy Saturday morning, Audre awoke to the sound of her gerbil, Samsun, gnawing on the metal cage it was kept in.

"Gosh Samsun, that's the fourth time this week you've woke me up. What am I going to do with you?" Samsun continued gnawing on the cage. "I might as well geet out of bed since I'm already wide awake." Audre stood up unwillingly and headed for the bathroom. Every morning she would wash her face, brush ehr teeth and comb out her long blonde hair. She got down a bowl and some cereal and took it to the family room to watch cartoons.

Soon, cartoons were over. Audre headed outside and into the woods right across the road. It had warmed up and Audre always liked to jump around in the creek. The creek was always warm and it was so pretty the way the sun would shine on it.

After following the trail in the woods for quite a while and listening to the sound of twigs breaking and bluebirds singing, she finally arrived at the creek. With a long leap and a sharp scream, Audre was in the water.

One hour had passed and Audre was <u>still</u> in the water. As she began to stand up, she felt tired and dizzy. She lay down and fell fast asleep.

Audre began to dream. Soon she saw herself in a pretty blue world. Castles around her and sea creatures everywhere. There were mermaids floating gracefully and sunken ships all around. Audre couldn't believe her big brown eyes. She glanced down and to her surprise she didn't have two legs anymore. She was a mermaid. There were no mirrors anywhere so Audre could only see the lower part of her body. She really was a mermaid. She couldn't help but become overwhelmed with excitement. "No more school, no more chores, no more anything."

"Excuse me, did you say something?"

cont. -

"What? Who was that?" Audre was frightened.

A little head appeared from behind a rock. It was another mermaid just like herself.

"Who are you?" the mermaid asked curiously.

"I'm not really sure, and I don't know why I'm here," Audre replied.

"Well, I don't know who you are or why you're down here, but I'm Splash and welcome to '101 Mermaids', but I guess you make 102."

"I guess so. Say could you tell me how to get back to land?"

"Oh, no! Once you're down here there's no escaping. I've been down here for three years and I'm still stuck here!"

"What do you mean STUCK?"

"I mean stuck, you know, can't get out, we've all been trying to get back to land."

"So what's keeping you from getting out?"

"Well, about two miles from here there's a land called Rockerties. No one dares go over there. Stagerties, the master and ruler of the land has the magic map that shows the way to land. Everyone that has ever dared go over there has never returned."

"Well, how do you know that they didn't go back to land?"

"Because, any mermaid that ever goes over there has to make a promise to come back and get the rest of the mermaids to lead them back to land, mermaids never break a promise! Now let's forget about getting back to land. Let me give you a tour, you'll be down here for a while."

Suddenly Audre began to think about not getting back to land. Everything ran through her head, would she ever see her parents again? Would she ever get to go back to school? She thought about Samsun too and wondered if she would ever get to hear him gnawing again. Would she ever get to sleep in her own bed again so that in the early morning Samsun could wake her up? Someone had to do something about this and Audre was the only one that hadn't lost hope.

Audre got her tour from Splash and met the rest of the

cont. -

mermaids and the mascot or you could say it was like a family pet. It was a dolphin named Shylow. Splash showed her where she would be staying. She was going to share a big shell with Splash. By the time the tour was over, it was 7:30. Audre ate supper and went to bed. She wanted to get a good night's rest. She planned to get up at 6:30 and head for Rockerties. She was going to do something about this problem. Mermaids were missing their families and no one would help them, but that was about to change.

It was hard for Audre to sleep, but she managed. She woke up at 6:45, packed her shell and was off. She wasn't planning to swim all the way, so she had to find another type of transportation. Suddenly she became excited. She would ride Shylow the dolphin. She ran and woke him up. When she told him where she wanted him to take her, he instantly turned around. He knew no one dared go over there.

"What's the matter Shylow?" Then she suddenly remembered what Splash had told her so she bribed Shylow with sardines and they were off.

Finally they arrived at Rockerties. She had traveled for more than an hour and had only stopped once to feed herself and Shylow.

In front of her stood a huge castle with gates surrounding it. It was a dark place and she wanted to turn around but she couldn't. She had to save herself and the rest of the mermaids. She tied Shylow up and began to walk towards the castle. She was overcome with fright but didn't want to chicken out. She began to climb the rusty gate but when her hair got caught she gave out a yell. Suddenly the castle door opened and two large white sharks came swimming out. They were followed by a majestic looking man.

"Kneel before me," he commanded in a deep voice. That was kind of hard to do when her hair was caught in the gate. She gave a good hard yank with her head and was free. She fell on her hand and knees.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"I am Audre, I come from the land of '101 Mermaids'.

cont. -

"Why are you here?"

"I have come for the magic map. I need it to find my way back home." Audre couldn't believe she was doing this.

"There is no possible way I'm handing over the map. GO AWAY!"

Tears began to fill Audre's eyes. She knew deep down inside that this wasn't the end and that she had to get the map. Audre quickly turned around but as soon as she heard the castle door shut she turned right back around. There was no doubT in her mind, she was going to get that map.

Audre knew she had to go back inside the castle. She bagan to get closer and closer until she was close enough to knock on the door, but she wasn't going to do that because she knew that he'd just tell her to go away for the second time. She quickly but quietly opened the door. The creeking sent shivers up her spine. She jumped to the sound of something falling over. She turned around only to find out it was Shylow.

"You've got to go back Shylow, I don't want you getting hurt."

Shylow gave her the saddest looking face and she gave in to him very easily. No argument about it.

She continued her search for the map . . . There it was! It was in a glass container setting on a golden table. There was no way she could get that map without getting caught.

She slowly walked over to the table and reached for the container when all of a sudden . . .

"What do you think you are doing?"

"Oh no, oh no, oh no," Audre whispered under her breath.

"GET HER!"

Audre began to run but she didn't know where she was headed, but she had to get away from those two tall, mean-looking men that were chasing her.

Shylow just sat there looking confused and as if he didn't know what to do. As Audre ran to hide behind the table, Shylow followed her to cut the two men off. They tried to dodge Shylow and took a sharp tuen to the left and got away from him.

cont. -

As they ran towards Audre, one of them bumped into the table causing a sudden pain in his right hip. As the table shook so did the glass container on top of it. The container fell onto its side and rolled off onto the floor. Shylow ran to get it and carefully picked it up in his mouth. Audre hadn't seen him pick it up so she wasn't about to leave, but as she noticed that there was not a glass container on the golden table, she thought, there was no use. She ran out the castle exit and Shylow tagged along.

"I guess I'll never get to go home Shylow. I"ll never get to see any of my friends or my family again." She began to cry. At this point, Shylow was very confused. He didn't know if he had done the right thing or not. If she would just turn around and see the map in his mouth. He tried to get her attention by moving faster and squealing but nothing seemed to work. She was just too depressed.

As they arrived back at the land of '101 Mermaids', everyone began to yell, "Way to go Audre!"

She had no idea why they were all cheering for she didn't know she had succeeded.

As she turned back to look at Shylow, she noticed the map in his mouth.

At first she just stared, they suddenly, "WE DID IT SHYLOW" she screamed with enthusiastic excitEment. She gently removed the container from his mouth. She took the map out and began to read it.

"ALL RIGHT."

As Audre leaned down to give Shylow a hug everyone began to cheer. "Audre, Audre, Audre."

"Audre wake up. It's time to go home," her mother stood above her trying to wake her up.

"I'm home Mom. Oh, I missed you so much."

Her mother smiled, picked her up and began to walk home.

by Lori Allison

I wish . . .
That . . .
uh . . .
I wish for a lot of things, like . . .
I . . .
Wish . . .
Well . . .
There are a lot of things to wish for . . .
like . . .
I know . . . just wait . . .
I guess what I really want is . . .
you know . . .
I sure know I don't want! . . .
So . . .
I've narrowed it down to one thing . . .
that I wish for is . . .

Something to say.

by Scott Tooley

I Wish

I wish for a million dollars
I wish to always scream & hollar
I wish for a little blue puppy
I wish for a big green guppy
but my real wish is to win a gold and
watch my record stand and hold

by Marty Kearney

The Homeless and Me

When you go on a vacation, it's usually a time of relaxation. You may be getting away from your school work or from your responsibilities. There's one thing I couldn't get away from on my vacation to Chicago, Illinois . . . The problem of homelessness.

Chicago is a busy city, many people, good and bad. It's loud, polluted, yet stunningly beautiful. There are the daily commuters that hurriedly rush to work and the tourists that take their time taking in all the sights and sounds. Tall buildings rise beside you while trains zoom above you.

My family and I decided to tour the downtown area and to visit the Sears Tower, a popular tourist attraction. We would walk rather than take a cab. I looked forward to the day ahead of me.

While walking down the sidewalk I noticed an older guy sitting by a building. I stared at him and he stared back. I didn't know if he was resting or if he had been there awhile. My mom nudged me and told me not to stare. She said he was homeless. I thought about this as we walked on. As we got farther away from the hotel I saw more and more people sitting on the side of the sidewalk. As we walked past an alley I saw a big cardboard box. A dirty and pale faced lady crawled out of it. Wow! I wondered how she felt. Alone, angry, sad, hungry, and then I looked at my family.

As we came closer and closer to our destination, it was hard for me not to stare at them. I had to look at the ground. Candy wrappers, cigarette butts, paper, and the homeless. A person with no permanent address, and one that can not afford a home. What were they doing here? It's America!

When we stopped for a red light, a man in his mid-forties came up to us and held out his hand. He was dirty and looked like he hadn't shaved in a while. His clothes were ragged and he walked with a limp. The light turned green and we continued

to walk. The guy turned away, but not to a home . . . he was homeless. Yet again, I looked up to my family.

We continued to walk next to the skyscrapers. Why were people homeless? I'd heard so many times that most of them were drug addicts, alcoholics, AIDs victims, and crazies turned away from crowded psycho wards. I wondered if sometimes these people were homeless because they don't have love or family. Again I looked at my family. I was pretty fortunate.

Ahead I saw the Sears Tower. I felt suddenly small. I wanted to get away from "these" people. I wanted to forget about them. Deep down inside I knew that wasn't possible.

Finally we arrived at the Tower. I was excited. I'm not afraid of heights and thought this would be pretty neat. At the top we were able to see as far as the eye could see. Looking down I saw many yellow tops of taxis. I also saw many other cars and buildings. As I looked out my mind sidetracked and I thought of the guy that came up to us and all the men and women I saw on the sidewalk. I felt sorry for them, yet I didn't. Why don't they get a job? Aren't they capable? Won't they have any family or friends they can ask to help them?

It still bothered me as we exited the building. I was very confused. What should I feel? What should I do? I knew I couldn't help all of them.

On our way back to the hotel we took a cab. Even in the shroud of vehicles it didn't erase the people with no homes. The people some call "bums". The people that get no help from the government except for a social security check now and them. The people are out there, not just in Chicago.

Our vacation was fun. I saw much of Chicago. I also learned something valuable. I learned that I am pretty fortunate and that I take too many things for granted. I should be thankful for what I have.

by Lana Jurgens

Feelings

People giving to not one,
But many in the world
The satisfaction
The joy
The thrill,
Joy and tidings ring throughout my head
Life is all around me side, to side, to side
North
South
East
Or West
Friends and neighbors
Caring
Sharing
Helping
Loving
The spirit of giving
A time to feel,
Games, races, the enjoyment of the town
Children playing all around
To some of the world is family
To others the world is low
But only one can understand
The world alone
The understanding of the feelings
The joy inside,
Tears of sadness go throughout my veins
Ripping ME
Tearing ME
And putting ME in pain,
Love is not here
Love is not there
Love is inside them
Showing those who care,
Hate, sorrow, strength, and wear
Can make you the better person
That probably wasn't there.

by Sarah Opolka

Hope

Families around the world
Growing
And hoping,
From the West to the East
From the North to the South
Caring, sharing
Giving, living,
The WORLD, moving, growing, and flowing
Not seeing this change around them
The pollution
Their parks,
Blacks against whites
Men against women
The gangs
The riots,
Destruction of neighborhoods
Indifferent to surroundings
Their playgrounds
Their community,
The make believe world
Where every family stays together
Growing
And hoping,
Forever for the rest of their lives.

by Sarah Opolka

The Beautiful and the Ring

Once upon a time Ken Carsen was searching for a wife. He searched around the country day and night for months. Whenever he came upon someone he liked he would go out to dinner with her, but there would always be something wrong!

One time a lady's ear lobe was too big. One's hair was too dark, and so on.

One night he had a date with a lady he thought might be his future wife, but she had to run home because a tornado was to be passing by that afternoon. He arrived home in the nick of time just as the wind began to blow.

Ten minutes later a beautiful blond came to the door of his cabin. His father Jim Carsen answered it.

"Hi, my name is Barbie. It is so windy out here, could I please come in. I just got a new hairdo," she pleaded.

"Sure, I guess you can," Jim told her.

"Thank you so very much," she replied.

"And heeeere's Barbie!" Jim shouted.

"I am so glad you're letting me stay here. A piece of my hair might have gotten knocked out of place out in that terrible weather," said Barbie.

"Would you like to stay for supper?" Ken asked her, "We are having cheese hot dogs."

"Why yes, that would be fantastic," she answered.

Ken suddenly had an idea. This would be the perfect chance for him to marry an intelligent and good-looking wife. He knew she was good-looking, but what he didn't know was if she was intelligent. Although he actually wasn't that smart, he knew a way to find out if she was or not.

"What is one plus one?" he asked her.

"What do you think I am, stupid?" she questioned him, "The answer is two, DUH!"

Ken was so dumb that he didn't know what else to ask her. He figured that as long as she was smarter than him that was

cont. -

okay.

While all this had been going on Jim had been in the kitchen preparing the cheese hot dogs, potato chips, peas, and fortune cookies.

Ken went into his room and found the ring he bought two years ago when he was going to get married. He went out to the kitchen to help his father dish out the food. He slipped the ring onto one of the hot dogs and put it on a bun.

Ten minutes later it was time to chow down. As you already know Ken was not the smartest person in the world. Actually he was the dumbest. So his plan didn't turn out as he had expected. The plates got mixed up so when they began to eat Jim took a bite of his hot dog and began to choke.

"Oh my gosh father, what's wrong?" he asked.

"There was something on my hot dog," he gagged just as the ring flew out of his mouth and landed on Barbie's plate.

"Barbie, will you marry me?" Ken asked her.

"Why, I guess so, but it's quick, you don't even know my last name yet," she remimded him.

"Well, what is it?" he asked her.

"It's Doll. My name is Barbie Doll," she answered.

"Okay, okay, Barbie Doll, will you marry me?" he asked again.

"Well, I guess so, but I need to get a dress, schedule a church, hire a caterer, find a bride's maid, get a ring and tell my parents. What are my parents going to say? I mean I go shopping and a tornado hits so I go to a man's cabin, eat dinner and get engaged all in one night," she rambled on and on.

And you know that one month was enough time to do everything and get married and to this day everyone laughs and laughs when they remember how Barbie and Ken got married.

by Katie Jones

Dreams

Basketball, a game where players say
they have a dream
that maybe someday
the fans will stand and scream.
The balls whiz through the air
always hitting their shot.
Those in the crowd will stare
awed by the ease of skills they've got.
Bird and Jordan examples of some
who have dreamed the dream.
Natural skill, hard work, and luck come,
to be all they want, yet seem.
When players can actually say
they are all that they can be
their love is brand new
they want the fans to see,
players made up of red, white, and blue
who have reached their goal
who have dreamed the dream
and have it in their soul
can be known as the true DREAM TEAM.

by Derek Schnorrenberg

THE PERFECT WEAPON

The moon showed it's light for the first time in weeks. The rain that had collected in puddles glistened with the white light that streamed down from the heavens.

The San Apolis Trojans had just defeated the Crinton Hawks and riots were breaking out in Crinton.

Rusty Deranger boarded the travel bus. He had scored to lock up the game for the Trojans. He was bushed.

The rest of the team boarded the bus and it pulled away from the High Stadium.

Rusty looked out the window. Hundreds of furious, disappointed, people were overturning cars out on the street. A shot rang out. Then another. One crashed through the bus window. It hit Rusty.

* * * * *

Voices. Rusty heard voices. Far off, almost in a daze. Then a bright light blinded him.

"His eyes are dialating! I think he's waking up!"

A cheer went through the room. Dwight sat up.

"What happened?" he asked.

"Well," said a man in white, "you have been dead for thirty years. Well, not dead. Your body has been working, but your brain was dead. You were dead all the same."

"Come on guys, don't fool with me. I was just shot. I don't need this." He was getting angry. What was wrong with these people?

"We are not joking." said a woman. "Welcome to the year 2023. Because of your elite physical condition, your have been preserved until you are needed. You will be one of the greatest soldiers in history. The perfect weapon."

Rusty swallowed hard.

"So what do you want me to do?" he asked shakily.

"We will tell you later. You will be updated on this time. If you acted and dressed like you did in your time, you would stick out. Do you know anything about the military?"

cont.-

Rusty groaned. He had gone to school and played football for Army and hated it.

"Let's get going then, shall we? Oh yes, my name is Helda Grenshaw."

Over the next couple of days, he spent long, intense, hours of watching films and learning about this time he had landed in.

On the sixth day Helda came to him.

"You have learned all that you need. Come with me."

He followed her out of the hospital and into a large van. They drove to a large parking lot.

"What are we doing here?" Rusty queried.

"Watch," was all she would say.

The parking space below them lowered into a large hangar. Dwight was astonished at all the advanced fighter craft that lay still and prone, ready to strike.

"Follow me," was the order from Helda. "This is the CP-17. It fires CO2 cartridges."

"CO2 isn't that strong is it?" Rusty wondered.

"It is highly compacted and the shrapnel is deadly."

As Rusty dressed in issued battle armor, he pondered all the briefing he had listened to the past couple of days. His job was to destroy the only other human preservation device. It was being built by the Libyans.

If he could destroy the building it was in, he might have a chance to go home. The radioactive distortion in the area might break him apart and put him back together in his own time.

He picked up a CP-17. Then he followed Helda to an ammunition and high explosives armory. She gave him five intra-gen bombs. "You will deposit one of these in each corner of the building and one in the middle."

She then gave him five ammunition belts. "Use them sparingly," she warned.

A loud explosion erupted from the heart of the hangar. "That should be your ride. I probably won't see you again, so good luck." She smiled and walked away.

cont. -

Rusty turned around. He knew he should get going. He ached to be back to his own time. He had always wanted to play football. It was his dream. He was acting out his dream. Then it turned nightmarish.

The anger that swelled within him was one he could not control. He sighed and ran to the fighter that waited to transport him home.

* * * *

He climbed the ladder to the cockpit. He nodded to the pilot and lumbered in back.

When the pilot was sure he was buckled in, he gunned the powerful engines. They screamed out of the hangar and into a tunnel sloping upward until they reached the surface.

They flew with speed Dwight had never experienced before. Within one hour they had reached the Persian Gulf, where the U.S.S. Pinnacle, an aircraft carrier, sat waiting. From there, he was taken by helicopter to Libya. This was it.

He jumped down from the helicopter and looked around. Desert. The helicopter's noisy rotors droned in the distance. He started to walk.

He walked for an hour. He climbed to the top of a large hill. At the top he looked down.

Bingo. A large building sat in the middle of a small, deserted city. The special projects building.

Rusty ducked as a tan helicopter flew overhead, swirling sand in his eyes and nose.

He felt a twinge of anxiety. I hope they didn't see me, he thought.

The helicopter landed on the roof of the building. A couple of soldiers got out carrying a large box. They opened the door to the stairs and disappeared inside.

Rusty took the chance and slowly made his way down the hillside. He came upon level ground next to a small building with strange symbols above the door. He went over and checked the door. It was locked. He had planned to wait until night, but he decided to just get it over with. He made his way down the dirt street, picking his way carefully to stay in the

cont. -

shadows.

When he reached the special projects building, he looked around the outside. He could not put the bombs on the outside since the structure was made to withstand impact. He would have to get inside.

He started toward the front of the building. He peeked around the corner. There were two guards with laser cannons set up behind metal bunkers.

Rusty stole across the street and into a small deserted cafe. He took careful aim and squeezed off two rounds. The explosion was not merciful to the guards. Dwight could not look at them.

At the entrance to the building he stopped. The doors were locked and he knew there was some futuristic alarm system.

He galloped down the steps and turned one of the cannons around. The blast could probably be heard for miles around. It blew a large hole in the wall and killed three clerks inside.

Dwight ran inside and sprinted down the hall. When he came to the corner, he placed a bomb and ran down to the next corner and placed another. But as he ran down the third hall he met with three soldiers- the ones from the helicopter! He shot at their feet and blew off their legs. At the end hallway, he placed the third bomb. Then he ran up the hall and placed the fourth and final bomb.

He started up the stairs at a quick pace. He climbed to the third floor. He was surprised he didn't run into any more resistance.

The clerks must be the only ones working, he thought.

The more he thought about it, the more he wanted to be home. He decided that it would be better to live in the future than die. So when he placed the last bomb down, he sprinted upstairs to get the chopper.

The pilot was still in the copter waiting for the soldiers. When he saw Dwight, he started to take off. Dwight jumped in the aircraft. The pilot tried to shove him out, but Dwight caught his arm and threw him off.

cont.-

He jumped into the pilot's seat. He knew he didn't have much time. He started to take off. He looked at the clock.

Oh no! he thought.

The explosion was deafening.

Dwight thrashed around in the emergency room.

"Code blue. Code blue. Severe burns, Dr. Smith to operating room."

Dwight stopped thrashing.

Oh, God, is that me? he thought. He checked himself. A bullet wound in his chest was the only mark he had.

"I'm back!" he yelled it with all his heart.

He found out later the doctors didn't think he'd last the night.

One month later he scored his comeback touchdown.

by Tom Schmidt

We Can Hear the Fight

Families, parents always getting into a fight,
standing in the house,
yelling and screaming,
TO SEE WHO'S REALLY RIGHT!

While up in bed, frozen from fright,
lay the children huddled,
helplessly waiting,
wondering if it's going to be alright.

We listen in tears,
the yelling has stopped,
not knowing what is happening,
NO ONE caring about our fears.

BANG- the slamming of the door
children finally relieved,
he has left us alone,
and here ends another war.

Melissa Daurer

The Almost Torn Apart Family

It was a busy morning in the Daniels' home. It was the first day of school. Carrie, who was sixteen, was starting her junior year and could no longer watch her two year old younger brother like she had all summer. Her mother was just rushing out the door as Carrie came down for breakfast. Her mother worked for an earthquake research team that was just a block away. Just as she was sitting down to breakfast, her father came down.

"Carrie, can you take Michael to his babysitter? I'm running late," Mr. Daniels said while running around the kitchen.

"Sure. Do I have to get him ready or is he dressed already?" Carrie asked.

"He's already dressed, all you have to do is feed him breakfast. Thanks a bunch," before finishing his sentence Mr. Daniels was out the door.

By then Carrie was done with her breakfast. She put her plate away and decided to go get Michael. She found him in his room playing with his toys. When she entered the room he looked up at her with his big blue eyes and smiled.

"Come on Michael, it's time for breakfast. I'll even give you a piggy-back ride," Carrie said knowing that Michael loved piggy-back rides.

"Okay!" he replied and jumped on her back.

As they were going down stairs she felt it, that horrible shaking. It was an earthquake.

* * * * *

Mrs. Daniels walked into the building and knew it was going to be a busy day. For all she heard when she walked into the building was, "Lindsay, we need you in the lab," or "Lindsay, we need you to sign this."

Something must be up, she thought to herself.

"Have there been any slight earthquakes around the area?" she asked thoughtfully.

cont. -

"Well, there's been one slight earthquake, but Lindsay, there's about one thousand earthquakes everyday. Just because one slight earthquake was located doesn't mean that we're going to have an earthquake," that was Bill, one of Lindsay's partners.

Lindsay knew that earthquakes were unpredictable, she just had this gut feeling. She wanted to know that Carrie and Michael were safe but before she could find out, it happened. Her worst fear come true, an earthquake.

* * * * *

"I knew I should've left earlier," Mr. Daniels said to himself. That's the thing he hated most about big cities, traffic jams. He could hear it now. The second he walked into the firm all he'd hear would be 'Kevin, you're late', or 'Late again Kevin'. He was brought back to realization by a horn. It was the car behind him. Traffic was starting to move forward. From that point on it only took a couple minutes to get to his firm. Since everyone should've already been there Kevin was the only one in the elevator. It would be a short time before he was there, for he only had three flights to go up. When he was between the third and forth floor the shaking began and the power went out. The earthquake.

* * * * *

Carrie and Michael tumbled down the next two stairs and slid under the table. Carrie had been in an earthquake before and knew what to do, the only thing was it had been a slight one, nothing like this one. She tried to calm Michael down but through her tears and his screams it was impossible. Carrie wished it was a dream but she knew it was for real. Suddenly she smelt something. It was the smell of smoke. Then it hit her, the earthquake had caused a fire. Her house was on fire! Carrie picked up Michael and ran outside. Outside was a mess, fences and houses were torn apart, the pavement was wrecked. She knew Michael was scared because all he kept saying was, "I want my mommy, I want my mommy!" Carrie knew he felt, that's what she wanted too. At that point she knew what she had to do.

cont. -

* * * * *

Lindsay fell to the floor with a huge thud. She tried to protect herself but she didn't have time to get under a desk, and as things started falling from everywhere, Lindsay was pinned on the ground by a huge chunk that had fallen from the ceiling.

"Ahhhhhhh!!!" she screamed with pain, "Somebody, help me!" but everybody stayed under the desks.

"Will somebody, please, help me! I'm hurt!" Lindsay cried in agony. Finally after it ended Bill came out and freed her. "Thank you. What took you so long? I could've been killed! Oh, my arm! I think it's broken. Oh, no. I've got to get to Kevin, Carrie, and Michael. They need me! Michael's only two years old, he's got to be scared to death!"

"Wait a sec, the only place you're going is the hospital. But first we have to see what damage it did. Plus there's always after shocks, we have to be ready. We'll wrap your arm first and then we need to get to work. Come on," Bill said.

So they wrapped her arm and went to check on the damage. Well, what they found they didn't like.

"Oh, wow. It was a seven on the rictor scale. It also caused a lot of damage." Just they the phone rang. Lindsay answered it. When she hung up she turned around and said, "The building, it cracked. We have to evacuate immediately."

* * * * *

Kevin fell to the floor. He pushed the emergency button but that wasn't good enough. He found an ax and opened the door. He crawled up and ran outside, he had to get to Lindsay.

* * * * *

Lindsay, Kevin, Carrie, and Michael all met up at Lindsay's building. They went home to find their house in ruins from the fire. But at that point the only thing that mattered to them was that their family was together.

by Jennifer Laing

I Wish

I wish I had a plane
To soar around the world
To fly free in the sky
Like a bird

I wish I had a rose
To bloom for only me
To love me just the same
As what I want to be

I wish I had a tree
So I could climb on it
To pretend I am a bird
And fly around it.

by Jana Donabauer

I Wish Poem

I wish . . .

I wish my baby brother could talk
I wish my older brothers couldn't walk
I wish I never had to clean my room
I wish they never would have invented the broom

I only wish.

by Andrea Anderson

Hawaiian Adventure

The Contest

I was doing my nails on a snowy day in Denver, Colorado. My best friend, Lindsay Hickerman, was sitting across the bed reading her favorite magazine Sixteen.

"I'm so-o-o-o- bored! I hate being cooped up inside because of snowstorms," I said angrily.

"Hey, look at this!" Lindsay said excitedly, pointing to a contest. "It says here you can win a trip to Hawaii! All you have to do is to make up a dessert using pineapple and send the recipe along. If you make the best dessert you win a trip to Hawaii. If you get second place you receive two hundred cans of pineapple."

"We probably won't even get any place in it, and anyway, if we do place what would we do if we were second place with two hundred cans of pineapple? I would get so sick!" I said making a face.

"Well, let's go for it anyway! It sounds like fun and we're so bored," Lindsay pleaded.

"Well-l-l-l, OKAY! Let's get started!" I sighed.

We went downstairs and into the kitchen. We started putting different things together. We called it 'Pineapple Surprise'. We got it all packaged up, slipped the recipe inside and sent it.

We Won

A month later Jessica Riser, my other best friend, came running up to me.

"Christa, Christa! Your name is in Sixteen! You w-w-won the Pineapple Contest! You won!" Jessie exclaimed.

"What?! We did? We're going to Hawaii? Wow, I've got to tell everyone!" I said excitedly.

cont. -

"Christa, it says you can invite three other people. Who are you going to invite?" Jessie subtly said.

"Well I have to invite Lindsay because she helped make the cake. I better invite my mom or she will never forgive me. The last person I'll have is Tony (my brother). No, I'll invite you instead."

"Finally you came to your senses. You wouldn't invite me instead of your brother, would you?" Jessie questioned me in a sad tone.

"Maybe," I laughed.

Hawaii

"Well, today is the day. I can't believe it! We're going to Hawaii!" I exclaimed.

"I know, it's so exciting! I hope we get good food on the plane," Lindsay said hungrily. She is always hungry, while Jess is on a diet every day. She is so skinny.

"We're here! It's so beautiful!!" I exclaimed.

"Yeah! We better get to our hotel. I can't wait to see it!" Lindsay said happily.

"You guys," Jessie said cautiously, "is that guy following us?"

"Yeah, it looks like it. It's like he knows us or something. I wonder what he wants?" I said.

Lindsay was holding on to my arm really tight by now. She gets scared easily.

"Let's just get to our hotel. We will be safe there. Anyway, he's probably just going the same as we," I suggested, hopefully.

"You are probably right. He's just a tourist like us," Jessie said. She still sounded a little frightened though. I had to admit I was still scared too.

At the Beach

My mom, Mrs. Blake, said that she would leave Jessie, Lindsay,

cont. -

and me by ourselves as we wished. She also said that she'd stay at a club on her own expense because the package didn't include it.

After we went to our hotel and got settled in we went down to the beach to get some sun. There were so many people. It took us a while to find a spot.

"The sun is so hot! I guess we're just not used to it. At least I'll get a tan to show off to everybody at home," I said happily.

After an hour or so we decided to go back to our hotel room. When we got to our room we saw the same guy from earlier down the hall coming toward us.

"Oh no! He's coming after us!" Jessie said in a whispering voice.

"Let's get inside, FAST!" Lindsay said.

So we went in really fast and locked the door. We expressed a sigh of relief.

"I wonder who that man is and why he keeps following us? It's like we can't leave our hotel room again," I sat down on the bed and just stared at hmyself in the mirror. I was so scared.

"Well, we're going to have to leave soon anyway. Let's just keep an eye out for him," Lindsay said confidently. Inside she was a little scared too. "We're here to have fun right? So let's just go to bed and forget about it!"

The Ocean

The next morning we decided to go jet skiing. We thought it would be really fun and exciting. It would also keep our minds off yesterday.

We got jet skis and headed for the water. Soon we got the hang of it. We were going really fast with our hair blowing in the wind.

"Wow! Look at that man! He is going double the speed we are. He must be a pro," Jessie said.

"Hey, isn't that the guy that's been following us? He is

cont. -

coming toward us," Lindsay said in panic. She has been panicky a lot since the explosion in the chemistry lab last year.

"Let's get out of here. Look, he just slowed down. Let's go while we can!" I yelled over the roar of the motors and the crashing of the waves.

We got back to the shore as fast as we could. He had a puzzled look on his face as we looked back. It was as if he didn't know what we were doing.

When we got back we talked awhile about it. We tried to think that they were all coincidences. But, we weren't convinced of that (inside). Then we went downstairs for dinner.

The Letter

After we stuffed ourselves at dinner we went to our room to get ready for bed. When we got to our door we found an envelope taped to it. I ripped it off and we went inside. I sat on the chair. Jessie and Lindsay huddled around me.

"What does it say? Open it!" Jessie said curiously.

I opened the letter and pulled out a folded sheet of paper. I unfolded it and read it aloud:

Dear Christa,

I have tried to stop you, but you won't. The next time you see me stop and I'll introduce myself.

Sincerely,

Mr. Brown

"Wow, he knows your name! I wonder what he wants?" Lindsay said acting like some kind of detective.

"He is probably looking for somebody else. The names are just coincidences," Jessie said.

"You're probably right," I said. Even though I knew it

cont. -

wasn't a coincidence. He really knew me and was after me.

Last Day

Today was the last day in Hawaii and we were determined to enjoy every minute of it. No matter what happened.

We decided to hit some of the stores to bring some souvenirs home. Before that we would spend some time at the beach for the last time.

So we put our swimsuits on under our clothes and headed out to the beach. When we got there it didn't seem as crowded as the day before. We found a good spot near the water, laid out in the sun, and swam in the ocean.

After we dried off and got everything together, we headed toward the shops.

"That was fun!" I said happily. Nothing had ruined the day yet.

"Yeah, now I'm ready to shop till I drop!" Lindsay said excitedly. She loved shopping.

First we went in a clothing store. I bought a T-shirt and cap while Lindsay bought about everything in the store!

Concerned

Then we went to the souvenir shop across the street. I decided to buy a cute, little, wooden, figurine. So, I went to pay for it. That's when I saw the man coming toward me. I didn't hear the woman talking to me.

"That's $5.56 ma'am. Are you okay miss?" the woman asked.

That's when I started to run hard and fast. I was too late. He had a hold of my hand.

"Hi, Christa! I've been trying to talk to you and your friends, but you keep running away," the man said calmly. He didn't look like a criminal.

"Who are you and what do you want?" I asked in a shaky tone of voice.

cont. -

"I'm from the pineapple company. I'm supposed to watch and make sure you're all right." He showed me his badge. Sure enough he said who he is. "Sorry if I scared you."

"You sure did! I thought you were some kind of criminal!" I laughed and he joined in.

Leaving

It was time to leave Hawaii. My mom had come earlier in the day to help pack. When we got to the airport I said goodbye to Mr. Brown, from the pineapple company.

"Well, bye! I'm glad we finally met. I better go," I said sadly not wanting to go.

"Hope you can come back soon!" he yelled as we left and I waved back.

by Christina Dengler

The Room

Karnie awoke to the loud, annoying buzzing of his alarm clock. He rolled over and peered at the clock. It read 5:08. He groaned softly and tumbled off the bed.

He went across the hall to the family bathroom and grabbed the toothbrush laying on the counter next to the sink. He put toothpaste onto it and started brushing. He looked into the mirror and saw the mirror image of himself. He spit the paste back out and stared at the mirror again.

"Ugh," he said. "I look horrible, even paler than yesterday. I'm not hot or cold. My stomach isn't heaving, and my head isn't pounding, so what's wrong with me?" he questioned the reflection. He sighed and looked back up at the mirror, half expecting to get a reply.

Karnie walked back into his room, plopped back down onto the bed and put on his new shoes. He grabbed a container of yogurt and a carrot out of the little fridge on his dresser. On his way down the stairs, he swung his bag over his shoulder, grabbed a few of his favorite books off the bookshelf, and dropped some cat food into the cat's dish.

While walking down the stairs, Karnie stuck everything he had taken into his bag. When he reached his twin sister's room he quietly opened the door and tiptoed inside.

"Letra," Karnie whispered softly, "get up and get the other three out of bed."

Letra replied, "Aw Karnie, I was having such a nice dream." There was a brief moment of silence when Letra said, "Karnie, I don't feel like going tonight. I still don't know what exactly to do. Sometimes I wish that we could live somewhere else, or sometime else. It seems like this is going to be the most exciting time in my life, when it is only a dumb ceremony. I . . ."

"Whoa," Karnie stopped his sister from droning on and on like she always did, "explain yourself. I mean, what are your

cont. -

reasons for wanting to visit other places or times?"

"Well, this time and place is SO BORING! And, that's also always been a curiosity of mine. I like exploring new things."

Karnie sat back and started thinking about what Letra had said. That wasn't the first time he had thought about that.

Suddenly, Karnie got a burning sensation in his arms and chest. He slowly dropped to the floor and everything turned black.

"Karnie!"

Emily woke abruptly up and slid out of bed hurriedly, to see why Letra had shrieked so loudly. She hastily dashed up one flight of stairs in their three-storied house. She stopped when she got to the half opened door.

She went in there to find Letra, tears streaming down her face, hovering protectively over a stiff Karnie and Rubrette, Flence, and Sawnie standing close by them. Emily just stood there in shock, as did the rest of them. Letra was the first to recover.

"Rubrette, go call 911, and hurry!" Letra commanded.

Rubrette just stood there with her eyes wide, evidently still out of it. Letra ran downstairs and called 911.

"Please . . . Please hurry," Letra whispered under her breath.

* * * * *

"Yes, Dr. Aviara, I was just standing there and Karnie grabbed his chest . . . fell to the floor . . . and . . .and . . ." Letra's voice trailed off as tears streamed down her face. Emily went to her daughter and held her as she sobbed into her shoulder. She rocked her back and forth to calm her down. Another doctor came over and whispered something in Dr. Aviara's ear, and she followed him to the front desk.

"It's okay honey," Letra's mother tried to soothe her. "Just calm down and read a magazine, or try to take a nap. You look exhausted." Emily went over to Sawnie, who was calling her mother's name.

Letra grabbed a magazine and began to read. She read for

cont. -

about 2 minutes before she drifted off to sleep.

* * * * *

Four hours later, Karnie had just woken up from a drug that the doctors had given him. He was now feeling fine and only once in a while the burning would start again. He heard a sound and he looked up to find his mother and his four sisters standing by his bed.

Karnie asked Dr. Aviara, who had come in with his family, "What's the matter with me doc?" He looked at Letra, and she turned around and fled from the room, sobbing as she went. Emily and Flence turned and followed her to calm her down again.

Dr. Aviara replied, after checking the data sheet in her hand, "Frankly, we've never seen this kind of bacteria before. We don't know what is to happen, and we haven't yet figured out how to stop it."

The doctor then left the room and Karnie's younger sisters came up closer to his bed. Rubrette came up and hugged him tightly and told him good-night. She left the room and Sawnie went over to Karnie and kissed him, then left, turning back only once to say good-night.

* * * * *

Karnie woke up again. He looked to the table next to his bed and saw his bookbag. He unzipped the bag and took out the carrot and the 4 books he had brought. He stuck the carrot into his mouth and looked at the books. They were: "Pawn of Phophesy", "Elfstones of Shannara", "Drasonlance Ledgends", and "Dragons Dawn". He thought about each one in detail because he had read them each about 20 times.

He wished that he could be like the characters in the books: brave, fearless, and always on adventures. He kept thinking about the characters, and then something interrupted his thoughts. . .

cont. -

"You can be like them," a voice from the shadows told him, "All you have to do is ask."

"Who just said that?" Karnie asked the air, looking frantically around for the source of the voice.

"You can actually hear me! Can you see me too?" the voice asked excitedly.

"No . . .yes! I can see you, but who are you?" Karnie asked the little creature standing by the door, who was about the size of his right palm.

"WHO AM I?!" the little creature yelled, and it's face turned red with anger. There was a clap of thunder and everything blurred.

Karnie looked around and saw 10 different colored doors. One was black, one was white, one was multicolored, and the other seven were the colors of the rainbow. There was something crouching in the corner to his right that caught his eye. He looked down to find . . .

"Letra!"

"Karnie?" Letra looked up, "Why are you here? I'm here because this little red haired thing got offened by me and . . here I am."

"That's why I'm here. I asked her who she was, and she got mad, and everything got blurry. Now I'm here," he said. "What is this place?"

"I don't know," Letra said, "but what is really wierd is she called me Karnie. When I told her I was Letra she got flustered and said she'd made a horrible mistake. The creature called this The Room, and I've been in almost every one of these horrid doors, trying to find the way out. First, I went into the red door, and it was so hot I could barely breathe. I got thrown into a fire at least a dozen times, and I felt it each time, but then everything blurred and I was sent back out here. No marks at all.

I've been in every one of these doors except the black, the white and the multicolored doors. Also that creature told me that I shouldn't go into the colored one, but I think that might be the clue to getting out of here. The only reason I

cont. -

haven't gone is that warning. It's stuck in the back of my head."

Karnie said, "Let's try the white door before we go into the colored one."

They both walked over to the white door before we go into the colored one."

They both walked over to the white door and pushed gently on it. Much to Karnie's surprise, the door slid open by itself. Inside was a room with a library and two comfortable looking chairs. "I'm so tired," Karnie thought, "I wish I could sit on one of those chairs."

Instantly they were sitting in the chairs and there was an apple hovering close to Letra, and a tomato was bobbing in the air over Karnie's head. They both ate what had been given to them, but when Karnie ate the tomato, a strange feeling came over him.

Karnie said to Letra, between mouthfuls, "This is sooo cool Letra! All we have to do is want something and we get it! I wanted to sit in these chairs and I wanted a tomato, and I got them!"

Letra let all of this information register in her mind. She thought about a book she had once read. In the blink of an eye, a book about a cruel wizard was in front of her. She thought about it, then looked up at Karnie, who was making a slight hissing sound. There before her was the wizard as she imagined him. Letra panicked, knowing too well what would happen if she didn't do something. She thought about the hall, then everything blurred again. They were back in the hall and they walked quickly to the colored door. They touched it, and it opened. There was a giant computer with zillions of tiny buttons of all colors, shapes and sizes. One panel caught Letra's eye.

On it was a picture of Ohio, where she lived, and black buttons all around it. There were three buttons on the side of the panel. One was marked "OHIO", another was marked "SPACE", and a third wasn't marked. Letra's sixth sense told her to

cont. -

press the "OHIO" button, so she walked over to the panel and pressed it. Everything blurred and Karnie and Letra were standing in front of the hospital. They walked inside, and went to Karnie's room. Dr. Aviara walked up to them, with a questioning look.

"Where have you been? You know, your mom was worried sick when she couldn't find you. Where did you go?"

The doctor rushed Karnie back to his room, and gave him a sound scolding. She took a blood sample. Letra was sent away, to await the results.

An hour later Dr. Aviara walked into Karnie's room with an amazed look on her face. "I don't understand this! The bacteria is gone, none at all. This is amazing. Where did you two disappear to?!"

Karnie and Letra exchanged glances. They both knew they could never tell where they had been, as no one would believe them. When the doctor left Karnie whispered to Letra, "It must have been the tomato. I felt funny when I ate it. I wonder who that little person was?"

by Tessa Wunder

I Wish

My wish is for a clean world,
One to leave for my kids.
A world free of garbage,
A world free of pollutants,
A world of good habits,
A world of smart uses.
Let us dream,
Let us work,
Let us wish . . .
A clean, wonderful world.

by Anne Tubbs

I Wish Poem

I wish there was world peace
And all pollution would cease.
I wish killing would stop
And all the gangs would flop.
I wish drugs were no more
And AIDS would find a cure.
But for right now, I wish
That I get an A on this.

by Jeremy Lydic

CHANGE OF RESIDENTS

Ralph, Jim, George, and Bob work for Inter-Galactic Police Officers (IGPO). They were cruising the Surealaoa Galaxy looking for strange or unusual things. They landed their shuttle on Exxon 4 to pick up some helifuel and munchies for the remainder of their patrol duties.

They noticed that Barb and Rhonda had been replaced by husky soldiers with Micro-bio stun lasers. Ralph placed 57 units of Helifuel on his IGPO charge account. Jim, Bob, and Ralph went inside to buy the refreshments. They went outside and got in the unmarked patrol shuttle, and left.

* * *

In the patrol shuttle Bob revealed his suspicions of sabotage to Ralph. He convinced Ralph to send the messages via subspace frequency to IGPO headquarters.

For the rest of the patrol and for the next three weeks it was the same as on Exxon 4. Wherever they stopped there were new people there. There were new helifuel attendants, new pressure suit manufacturers, new store operators, new stores, new clerks, even new residents. With each encounter their suspicions grew and they called it in to IGPO headquarters. After awhile their suspicions grew to the point that they had to do something about it!

* * *

Ralph, Jim, George, and Bob had (by order of the IGPO security council) their looks and physical features surgically altered so that they looked like residents of Axdron 5, a planet that still had the same inhabitants as before.

The quartet received undercover names (Ralph = Auk, Jim = Liu, George = Rak, Bob = Zaw) and apartments in a

cont. -

secluded section of the planet. They each also received a relatively old shuttle to use for transportation.

The group had been living on Axdron 5 for over a month. No one had suspected them but they wondered why nothing had happened.

One day while he was in the city buying nutrients for the replicator, George overheard a conversation between Xavier the rebel leader and Nitrogen a rebel android. Their conversation was, at first, about their plan to set up troops and bases to replace residents and stores or buildings. Then Nitrogen brought up a rumor he had heard about IGPO officers on the planet.

When George heard this he turned and walked (he had decided to walk today because the weather had been fair), as quietly as possible away from the warehouse. As he did one of the nutrients fell to the ground.

George finished the 12 kilometer walk in less than an hour. He got in the turbolift and rode to the 28th floor. He got out of the turbolift, put his hand to the sensor (to open the door), and walked inside.

* * *

Nitrogen and Xavier walked out of the warehouse after they heard someone leave. Nitrogen spotted the nutrient container that George had dropped. He analyzed it and then accessed the identification files of Axdron 5. He discovered that the fingerprints were made by Rak. Nitrogen accessed Rak's personnel file to find an address.

After he had the address Nitrogen went to the apartment complex and rode up the 28 floors in the turbolift. He then bypassed the sensor and walked in. Ralph, Jim, and Bob were all sleeping in their quarters. They did not wake up because they had had a long night updating the information on the computer and with headquarters. Since he wanted no witnesses, Nitrogen stunned Auk, Liu, and Zaw then kidnapped them.

cont. -

* * *

The apartment had been trashed. No one was there. Someone or something had been there before George. George bacame worried when he saw that the computer disks were gone. He then called all of the others' jobs, he found that none of them had reported for work that day.

George combed the room looking for some kind of clue that his buddies might have left him, to tell who had them and where they went.

George was about ready to give up when he saw a group of scrambled letters on a computer screen. He couldn't make heads or tails out of them at first, but then he thought more clearly and saw that it was pig Latin. George smiled at the thought of Ralph or Jim writing him a code in pig Latin. His smile quickly disappeared when he thought about why they wrote the code.

The note read:
Nitrogen. Old nuke
warhead plant

* * *

Nitrogen had taken the trio to an old abandoned nuclear warhead plant in the middlt of the Axdron 5 desert region. The area had no vegetation because nuclear warhead tests were conducted there. This, in turn, left the building wide open for anything.

* * *

George was calling for back up from IGPO headquarters when the frequency went dead and the lock on the door clicked. Now he was a prisoner too!

Gas started to enter the room through the vents. George tried to fix the automatic climate control but it was malfunctioning. Then he blacked out.

cont. -

* * *

Nitrogen's shuttle lifted off from the warhead plant and headed South toward the city. After Nitrogen had left, Ralph came around and looked for something to throw at the electrocell generator beam housing. Jim and Bob awoke and started to help. Jim found a piece of metal but it didn't go far. Bob thought he saw something but it was just a hallucination. Ralph then found a piece of warhead nose cone. The piece was 3.5 contimeters in diameter. Ralph threw a perfect strike that hit the generator beam housing.

Jim saw a cabinet and looked inside. In the cabinet were four micro-bio stun lasers. He then heard, a shuttle and told Ralph and Bob to hide.

The door opened and George was thrown in. The rebels looked in and saw that the prisoners were gone. At that moment Ralph, Jim, and Bob jumped up and stunned the entire group with the stun lasers they had found. The rebels dropped dead. Ralph ran outside to check for more rebels then motioned for Jim and Bob to carry George, to the rebel spacecraft.

The four left the planet and warped to IGPO headquarters. They reported everything to Nick Boss. He gave them a fleet of 10,000 troops heavily armed to storm the planet.

So Ralph, Jim, George, and Bob escorted the fleet to Axdron 5.

They stomed the planet and took Xavier, Nitrogen, and 5,000 rebels alive.

EPILOGUE

Xavier was sentenced to 50 years on Prisonatron, the confinement planet. The 5,000 rebels were each sentenced to 25 years on Prisonatron. Nitrogen was disassembled and used as parts for a new starship, the NITRO.

by Kelly Green

cont. -

The World

We - the World
People, friends, women,
Neighbors, children, men.

We - the Continents
Crime, economy, rights,
Judgements, riots, fights.

We - the Countries
Cultures, hills, wildlife,
Skies, trees, strife.

We - the People
Friendship, loving, together,
We - the World forever.

by Stephanie Henzen

The Forest

The people in the night
Move while the forest grows,
Though they still shiver
The river still flows.

The pidgeon flies
High over the trees,
It tries so longingly
To touch the breeze.

The owl flies by the light
Of the moon,
Hoping to find something
to fill his room.

by Andi Engler

SPORTS

We like sports,
Of different sorts.

In hockey you use pucks,
When running you jump hurdles.
When hunting you shoot ducks,
When swimming you touch turtles.

In bowling you get strikes,
In rugby you might fumble.
When cycling you use bikes,
In rock climbing you shouldn't tumble.

In fishing you use worms,
Sports uses lots of terms.

by Sara Stear

Our Friendship Has No Ending

"Did you hear, there's a new girl! She's in my homeroom, she's pretty, but she's kind-of mean and snotty," said Mandie, on of my lesser friends.

"Yes Mandie, I heard, she's in my Spanish class," I said.

I am Kelly Schrader. I live in Dalton, and I'm sixteen. Today a new girl came to my school, her name is Robin Hallmann, she's sixteen too. True, she looks kind-of snotty, but she was very nice to me. I invited her over for dinner, as a welcome, but she said she could only come over for awhile.

The doorbell rang, and soon she was in my foyer. With bulging eyes she said, "Wow, look at this place!"

"What?" I said.

"It's huge, how many stories are there?" she asked in awe.

"Three, why?"

"Oh, just wondering, so where's your room?" Robin said.

"Follow me, it's on the third floor," I said.

Soon we were sprawled in front of the television, laughing, eating popcorn, and watching reruns.

"Oh great, I have to go Kelly, but I had a great time, thanks!" Robin said as she grabbed her coat.

"Oh, okay. Well, I'll see you in Spanish tomorrow."

"Okay, bye!" she said and left.

Since then, Robin and I have become best friends. It's been about three months since she's moved here. We do everything together, shop, talk on the phone, sleepovers. Up until about two weeks ago, everything's been great. But about two weeks ago I started to notice weird things about her. She's gone a lot from school and home, and when she is at school, she doesn't exactly look her best. When I found out why all this was happening, I was so shocked. Here is what happened:

I was shopping downtown, and on my way home I saw Robin with this guy. She slipped him something, and he slipped her a

cont.-

plastic bag. I knew exactly what had happened. The guy quickly walked off. I decided to confront her.

"Robin," I called.

She flipped her head around and quietly said, "Hi."

"Who was that guy?" I asked.

"What guy?" she asked confused.

"The guy you were just talking to."

"Why?" she asked.

"Well, because it looked like you were buying drugs," I said quietly.

Then her whole expression changed, "I'm sorry Kelly," she started to cry, "but my life isn't going so great right now, so just stay out of it!" she said and ran off.

"Wait, Robin, Wait!" I yelled but it was no use.

About ten-thirty that night I called her and asked her to come over. At first she said no, but I persuaded her. How I don't know, but she came over.

"Hi Robin, are you feeling okay?" I asked her as she walked in. She was a mess, her hair, her clothes, she had bags under her eyes, and her nose was red.

"Not really," she said.

"Well, come in and sit down, we have to talk,"

"Look, maybe this wasn't such a good idea," she said.

"Wait, Robin. I'm not forcing you to do anything, but I really think you need to talk to somebody," I said.

"Well, okay," she said, "but first, nothing that I'm telling you goes out of this room, okay?"

"No problem," I said.

"Well, it all started about two weeks ago, I was at this party, and, well, I got drunk," she said, "I met this guy, Brad, and he said he could make me fly. Heck, I was so far gone that I believed him."

"I can't imagine you flying," I said trying to be funny.

"Ha-Ha, well anyway, he gave me this coke and said it was magic dust. I sniffed it and a minute later I felt like I was flying. At the time, the feeling was great. So, I kept doing it everyday, and now I'm hooked. Except now, instead of

cont. -

flying, I'm falling."

"That bad?" I asked.

She was teary-eyed as she said, "Worse."

"I'm sorry, Robin. I wish you didn't have to go through this," I said as I squeezed her hand, "but I have an idea, whenever, no matter what time, if you ever think you're going to take the drugs call me, okay? Because I'll help you, only if you want it though, do you?"

"Well, yeah, I guess," she said.

"Great! Now, just remember, anytime, okay?"

"Okay, well listen, I gotta go, maybe catch up on some homework. I'll see you later," she called.

"See ya!" I said.

Oh my gosh! I can't believe it! Drugs! Her life must be pretty bad right now. I am so shocked was all I said in my head. I hope my help does her some good. I'm sure she'll get through this. She'll make it, I just know it, at least I hope she does.

After about a month she was doing great. A couple of times I thought she was gonna give up. She'd call and we'd talk and cry. She stuck to it though. I was so glad. Then late one night I got a call from her mom.

"Hi, Kelly, this is Mrs. Hallmann, Robin's mom," she said sadly.

"Yes, this is Kelly, how can I help?" I asked.

"It's Robin, could you come down to the hospital? Something happened to her. The doctors said drugs."

"Oh my gosh! Sure, I'll be there right away, bye!" I said and ran to my car. How could this happen? Why, why Robin? She won't die! She can't die! Please don't die! Please be all right! I could barely drive because I was crying so much. About fifteen minutes later I was at the hospital.

"Mrs. Hallmann!" I called to her.

"Kelly! Why won't they tell me what's wrong?" she asked crying.

As I approached her I said, "I don't know, are you okay?"

"Not until Robin's okay," she said.

cont. -

"Here, come on, let's sit down. Do you want some coffee?" I asked her.

"Sure could use some," she said.

"Okay, I'll be right back."

I wonder if she knows? Should I tell her? I can't believe this! Suddenly everything went blurry. The next thing I knew I was in bed feeling very sore. A nurse walked in.

"Where am I?" asked her.

"You passed out in the cafeteria and broke your arm," she replied.

"Oh, that was good. My best friend is dying and I break my arm. Why don't I just kill myself. The nurse left and Mrs. Hallmann walked in.

"Hi, look, I'm really sorry Kelly."

"Wait, it's not your fault," I interrupted, "I was thinking about Robin and it happened. I'm really sorry about the trouble I've caused."

"Oh, don't be. I mean what else could go wrong. Robin's not doing so good. I got to see her and she looks terrible," she said crying. "She wants to see you. If you feel okay you can go ahead and see her."

"Well, okay," I said and got up.

I walked in there and all I could hear was the beep of the heart monitor.

"Robin, are you okay?" I called.

"Kelly, is that you?" I heard in a quiet, raspy voice.

"Yeah, it's me. How are you?" I asked quietly.

"I'm not doing so good as you can see."

Her mom was right, she did look pretty bad. She was frail and she had bags under her bloodshot eyes. I couldn't help crying.

"Why? Why didn't you call me? I thought we were gonna make it through this thing," I asked.

"I did, but you weren't home, and I couldn't help it. It took control of me, and I took the drugs. I'm so sorry Kelly, please don't hate me. I don't want this friendhip to end."

"No, Robin, I could never hate you. Don't worry, our

cont. -

friendship has no ending. Plus, this is all my fault. I wasn't there to stop you," I said holding her hand, "I could have been there."

Her grip tightened as she cried, "NO! This isn't anyone's fault but mine! I love you, and I never want you to blame yourself for this! I ruined my life, don't let me ruin yours!"

Then her grip loosened and seconds later the heart monitor let out a long, piercing beep.

"Robin . . . Robin, answer me!"

I then knew she was gone.

Throughout the funeral just about everyone cried but me. I felt so terrible. Why didn't I tell her to go to rehab? Why? I should have known she couldn't make it through this alone. I didn't help her as much as I could have, and now look what I've done! I have to cry now, I can't hold it back. As they lowered her into the ground, I let it all out.

"Goodbye," I whispered and she was gone.

by Brandy White

Five Sense Poem

Nervous

When I'm nervous I can tell because,
I can feel my stomach's discomfort,
I can hear the blood
rushing in my ears,
I can smell my sweat
dripping down my brow,
I can taste blood, because
I have been chewing my lip,
I can see when its over,
that it wasn't worth all of that!

by Amanda Spies

"Rain"

Clear forever
falling, splashing, evaporating
Rain is Magic. Does it ever
end?

by Jenn Kunch

Michael the Jam-Man
(as sung to 'Frosty the Snowman')

Michael the Jam-Man,
Was a jolly happy player,
With his tongue stuck out and his Jordans on,
And three points made way out there.

Michael the Jam-Man,
Is a fairy tale they say.
He was made of flesh but the fans all know.
How he came to life on day.

There must have been some magic in those old gym shoes he found,
For when he placed them on his feet he began to move around.
Oh, Michael the Jam-Man was as great as he could be,
And the fans all say he could shoot and play, so much better than old Lar-ry.

Jumpety jump jump, jumpety jump jump, watch as Michael goes,
Jumpety jump jump, jumpety jump jump, over the courts of foes.

Michael the Jam-Man,
Knew his shot was hot that day.
So he said, "Let's run and we'll have some fun,
Now before I age away."

Down near the foul line with a basketball in his hands,
Running here and there all around the court, say-in, "Catch me if you can."

He lead them on the court of wood,
Right past the referee.
He only paused a moment when,
He heard they holler "Three!"

cont. -

Michael the Jam-Man, had to hurry on his way.
As he waved good-bye say-in "Don't you cry, you will win again someday."

Jumpety jump jump, jumpety jump jump, watch as Michael goes,
Jumpety jump jump, jumpety jump jump, over the courts of foes.

Michael the Jam-Man,
Was not a happy player.
When his shoes were stolen and his ankle hurt,
And B.J. wasn't there.

Michael the Jam-Man,
Is an honest guy they say.
He was always nice,
But the others know not to cross him on this day.

There must have been some magic in those old worn shoes he found,
For without those shoes on his feet he couldn't get a rebound.

Oh, Michael the Jam-Man,
Was as mad as he could be.
And the players say he didn't shoot or play,
Just stare at you and me.

Jumpety jump jump, jumpety jump jump, watch our Michael frown,
Jumpety jump jump, jumpety jump jump, looking for that clown.

Michael the Jam-Man,
Felt his ankle begin to swell.
So he said, "Let's stop and think it out,
While we sit here for a spell."

Down along the courtside,
With a towel in his hand,
Pacing here and there all around the bench,
Say-in, "Help me I demand!"

cont. -

He sat them down on the benches,
Right in front of the action.
He only paused a moment when,
He heard them holler, "It's Coach Jackson!"

For Michael the Jam-Man,
Had finally figured this all out.
So he gave high fives say-in, "Let's go guys,
We can win this one in a rout."

Jumpety jump jump, jumpety jump jump, watch as Michael goes,
Jumpety jump jump, jumpety jump jump, over the courts of foes.

Michael the Jam-Man,
And his team had made a repeat.
With a three pointer here and a slam-dunk there,
And a lift from his feet.

Michael the Jam-Man,
Is a champion they say.
He likes to golf but the fans all know,
It's basketball he plays.

There must really be some magic in that tongue he likes to stick out,
For when he wags it from his mouth he begins to shoot lights out.

Oh, Michael the Jam-Man,
Was as excited as he could be,
And the fans all hoped he could keep it up,
And go for trophy number three.

Jumpety jump jump, jumpety jump jump, watch as Michael goes.
Jumpety jump jump, jumpety jump jump, over the courts of foes.

by Lindsay Jenkins

Dickens

There once was a cat named Dickens.
Who was really like a kitten.
He had green eyes and, gray hair.
And was as wild as a bear.
He was part Persian and part Siamese,
And he had a delicate little sneeze.
He would make everything a toy,
And play with it with joy.
But when it came to baths,
He was gone in a flash.

Jillian McClurg

What is Sadness?

Sadness is a dark shade of blue,
It smells like smoke,
It tastes like a lemon,
It sounds like a thunderstorm,
It feels like a piece of sandpaper.

by Kelly Bell

DEADLY AFFAIRS

One day a little girl heard her father screaming in outrage at her mother. "If it wasn't for my little girl who needs a mother you wouldn't be in my life, I'll guarantee it!"

Tiffany, who was only seven years old, started crying and ran into the bedroom yelling, "Don't say that Daddy, I love my mommy."

"Oh honey," Rebecca, the mother said. She was always covering up for her husband. "He was just kidding."

"Yeah, of course I was kidding. I would never say that," Robert replied while exchanging looks with his wife. Suddenly the phone rang bringing everyone back to the outside world.

"I'll get it!" Tiffany hollered.

"No!" Rebecca answered quickly. But it was too late. Tiffany had already answered the phone and was standing there with a very puzzled look on her face.

"Who is it Tiff?" Robert questioned.

"It's your friend Mitch," she stated.

"Great, let me talk to him," he said while reaching for the phone.

"But he doesn't want to talk to you, he asked for Mommy."

It was no secret that Rebecca and Mitch "saw" each other before she married his best friend, Robert. What nobody knew was that they had "gotten together" a few times after she married. Robert still got tense when he and Rebecca went to events that Mitch attended too.

"Oh he does, does he? I wonder what about," Robert replied jealously.

"I swear I don't know anything about this. I'll take it in the other room," she said. "Hello?"

"Hi . . . I want the five grand by tomorrow afternoon," Mitch said in a wispy voice.

"Tomorrow? Are you serious? You just demanded it on Wednesday and you want it by tomorrow? You know darn well I can't possibly have it to you and still give Tiffany a good

cont. -

Christmas," she said furiously.

"Well, you'll have it to me or pay the consequences," and with that the line went dead.

The next moring Rebecca and Tiffany awoke to the sound of sirens. They got dressed quickly. In the kitchen they found a note from Robert that said he read about a murder in the newspaper and he went to the site. Next to the note was the newspaper. The front page headline reading: "MURDER OVER MONEY." She read the article over breakfast. It read that Mitch Plankert was murdered and she was the suspect because he was blackmailing her. They had their conversation of the previous night, and that was the evidence they were holding her with.

Before she was even finished with her breakfast, there was a knock on the door. When she answered it she was greeted by two police officers. "We would like to ask you some questions regarding the murder of Mitch Plankert," the head officer spoke.

"Sure. Come in, come in."

"Okay, let's begin," the officer said sternly. "Was Mitch Plankert blackmailing you?"

"Yes," she said quietly.

"Why?" he questioned.

"I think you already know."

"We have to keep our stories straight. If you don't answer the questions here, you can always answer them at the station," he said matter-of-factly.

"All right. We had a relationship about a month before I was to marry Robert. Mitch called it quits for Robert's sake. I was hurt because he dumped me all of a sudden. After I was married to Robert for about a year, Mitch and I started having an affair. Everything was great 'till Mitch calls one day and demands five grand. I told him there was no way he could do this to me because I didn't have the money. He told me if I didn't have it to him by today, he would tell Robert about our affair," she said while she started to cry.

"I see," he said while jotting stuff down in his notebook.

cont. -

"Why were you so afraid of Robert finding out?"

"Because he could file for divorce and use my affair as proof that I wasn't a good mother and he would get full custody."

"Oh, I forgot about the child. How old is she?"

"Seven."

"I presume the child was here all night too?"

"Yes, she was!" Rebecca said excitedly.

"Do you suppose she could answer a few questions for us?"

"Yes. Lately she has been coming into my room in the middle of the night. She could tell you I was here at the time of the murder."

"Is she here now? Can we talk to her?"

"Yes, she's in her room. I'll be back in a minute." A few minutes passed. Then Rebecca returned with Tiffany.

"Hi. What's your name?" the officer asked.

"Tiffany," she replied.

"Can we ask you a few questions, Tiffany?"

"Yes."

"You just have to promise to tell me the truth. Tell me about last night."

"Last night Mommy read me a bedtime story and I fell asleep. I woke up in the middle of the night because I had a nightmare. I sat up straight in my bed, feeling really scared. Usually when I have nightmares I crawl in bed between Mommy and Daddy, because I feel safe there. But last night Daddy wasn't there."

"He wasn't? Do you know where he was?"

"No. When I woke up in the middle of the night in my bed, I looked out my window that faces the street and his car was gone," Tiffany said honestly.

"Do you know what time it was?"

"I can't tell time," Tiffany said looking at the floor.

"I do," Rebecca spoke. "It was 2:30 a.m. I remember because I went to the kitchen to get Tiffany some warm milk."

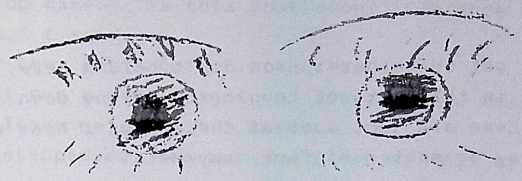
"Thank you for your time. I think the police have the wrong person. It sounds as if your husband found out about the

cont. -

affair, killed Mitch and framed you," the officer said confidently. "And I'm pretty sure you're going to get full custody, so don't worry about it."

And with that the police officers left. They arrested Robert, and Rebecca and Tiffany both lived long happy lives.

by Stephanie Mangels



Blue

Blue is the color of the sky.
Blue is the color of my eyes.
Blue is the color of the sea.
Blue is sometimes the color
of you and me.

by Rebecca O'Polka

COLOR
POEM

Blue is the color
of worry, or just
lots of fury,
blue can be love.
and blue can be
hate or show a lot of fate

by Tyler Kamish

Why Do You Hate Me, Because I'm Black

"Hey, get outta here. You don't belong here. Watcha doing here in this part of town? You belong down in the slums." These are just some of the things I hear walking down the streets, or matter of fact, anywhere.

It never really bothered me until that one summer day that all this name calling hurt my feelings as a black man. As I was climbing aboard the bus a familiar voice called out, "Wait up Tyrone!" As I turned around who would it be but Clarence, an old time bully. I just ignored him and climbed aboard. He followed, of course.

"What do you want?" I asked.

"Oh, I just wanted to see how you're doing, 'Blackie'." he said tauntingly.

As I stood in the aisle, because the whites took all the seats, he started talking about old memories. As he was talking I pictured them in my mind, all the brutal things they did to me, name calling, beating me up just because of my skin color or in other words, difference.

These memories that he brought back were painful. Years after school was over I always tried to block these memories out. I conquered that until he brought them back.

After that I changed the subject quickly. Is that the only reason you wanted me to wait up, for you to bring back all those memories? And why? You never liked me anyway! You and your friends were always beating me up and even one time you put a burning cross in my front yard and graffiti on our walls.

All these memories started pouring out of my head. With my head whirling I felt wet tears rolling down my cheeks. I couldn't let Clarence see this. He would know what was wrong, I just couldn't let him see. A man shouldn't cry I thought, but I couldn't help it. After a long while I thought why was I crying. Was it just because I was hurt by these memories or did I really have a reason. I thought, yes, I do have a

cont. -

reason, I hate Clarence, I hate memories, I hate me-- but why? I have no idea.

My stop came. "Is this your stop?" Clarence asked.

"Yeah," I said.

"Mine too, let's go," Clarence said.

"No, I don't want to go. Go away, you're here to irritate me. Just leave me alone," I said.

As I stepped off the bus the fresh air hit my face, bringing me back to the real world. Now there was freedom of blacks, no separation, or slavery, but there were still riots. How disgusting, I thought. Soon afterwards I heard footsteps follow in the L.A. sun. I turned around. It was Clarence, just the person I didn't want to see.

"Tyrone!" he yelled.

"Get away!" I said.

"I want to be friends with you, not your enemy like the past. In the past Tyrone, it wasn't right to treat blacks the same as whites. Now you have freedom," he said.

"No you don't understand, Clarence. There were the L.A. riots. I have to watch what I do for the rest of my life, afraid something like that would happen to me. Do you understand me now? You're white and I'm black. Now just leave me alone!" I said angrily.

I walked away kind of mad at myself, maybe he just wanted to be friends, but on the other hand, I didn't really believe him. What am I supposed to do I wondered, as I headed towards my apartment building. As I went to 1B and put the key in the lock I noticed there was graffiti on the door spelling, "GO HOME BLACKIE," and the locks didn't work. What a joke I thought. Clarence was the only one that knows that nickname. He made it up!

"What a jerk!" I yelled. "Tyrone, will you be my friend?" I mimicked.

As I turned around to go to the front desk all these white, muscle-bound men, including Clarence, came toward me with knives. They're not coming for me, I thought, but they were because no one else stood in the hallway except me.

cont. -

"Help, help me!" I bellowed.

No one answered my call. There I was standing alone in a dark hall with men ganging up on me. As they came closer, my breathing bacame heavier and I felt like running but I couldn't. I was frozen stiff like an ice statue that will soon melt.

"What do you want?" I asked calmly.

"We just want to get you out of our part of town, black boy. You don't belong here, or can't you read the writing on the wall?" they said.

"This is America, isn't it. People are free here no matter what race," I said.

"Oh yeah, but we don't think so," replied Clarence. "So pack your bags and get the heck out of here," he said threateningly.

"I would if I could, but I can't because you changed the locks on my apartment," I said.

"Oh, I guess that's too bad now, isn't it?" they jeered.

Pretty soon shiny, silver blades came toward me, but didn't touch me. They didn't bother stabbing me, they decided to use their hands instead. Each of them took a turn. I still hadn't moved a muscle, just stood there helpless, not knowing what to do. I was afraid they would hurt me more. After what seemed like hours of terrifying horror, they stopped and walked casually away, leaving me to die.

I was black, blue, and bloody and afraid to move for I thought I would break. Just lying there, an old lady came out yelling, 911 to come to my aid. Soon after a crowd came and paramedics loaded me in the ambulance. That's about all I really remember besides every part of my body hurting. I must have been hit with a heavy object.

After being cleaned up, examined, and x-rayed, I was settled into a nice room. Two days later Dr. Berg came in hoping I would be awake to talk. I was, unfortunately.

"Tyrone, I don't know how to say this but the tests show that you have broken your spine and you will be paralyzed for the rest of your life. I'm sorry, Tyrone. I'll let you be

cont. -

alone now," said Dr. Berg.

I was too speechless. During the night I lay there and cried myself to sleep thinking how this all started and how it ended with me lying in a hospital bed. I fell asleep afterwards.

The next morning sun filled my room and the aroma of flowers filled the air. A wheelchair was by my side, the sight of it made me sick. Before, I was capable of walking, now I can't because of my skin color. Right then I lost my thought, a cheery nurse came in to tell me I was going home. I replied simply, "I don't have a home. They kicked me out because of my race."

"Oh yes you do, Tyrone. Look who's here," the nurse said.

Just then my parents walked through the door. "Let's go home!" I said. I wanted to go away from this city, back to where everybody was nice no matter what race.

I left the hospital, town, and nightmare of L.A. I felt sad and happy all at once. I hope I would never have to live through that night of terror again. In fact, I knew I wouldn't, I would be at home with my parents in my wheelchair.

by Stephanie Henzen

"Thanksgiving"

The best thing about Thanksgiving is to see the family all together at my aunt's and uncle's house.

The reason I like it is because I get to see my cousins. I have two cousins that are in the same grade as I am, Susie and Sadie. We like to leave the family to talk while we go to the basement to play pool. Some of the younger cousins like to follow us around so we have to run and hide from them to get them to leave us alone where we can talk.

When the family gets together to eat, everyone finds their seat, and we pass the food around and take a spoon full. We all pray at the same time. The best thing about Thanksgiving is the food and that there's always plenty of it left. When everyone is finished, their stomachs are filled with delicious food.

When my cousins and I are done eating, we go to the basement and play more pool or other games.

When it is time for my family to leave, we gather all the pots and pans that we brought food in. We take them to the truck, and everyone gets to go home. My dad starts the truck, and we are on the thirty minute ride home.

Salem Glover

"Seattle"

Seattle has many places to visit; there are markets, tall
buildings and shops.
There are even neat places to visit in the mall;
There are bicycle cops.
The Space Needle is a neat place to go;
the restaurant goes to and fro.
On the freeways you are always on the go;
you don't stop to say hello.
The Kingdome has a big cement ceiling;
that way the ceiling won't be peeling.
There are many other places to go;
I can't tell you all of them, you know.
If you really want to know, I will name a few:
Fisheries and Breweries,
Markets and Malls,
Boeing and Glowing on the lights of the town.

Jaci Peters

Love is . . .

Love is when two people love and care for each other very much.
Love is helping people when they need help.
Love is having a family to share expressions with.
Love is when you cuddle a baby and it knows who cares for it.
Love is a great part of life and nobody should take it for granted.

Erin Hinz

deer san+a Claws

in stEd ov 1 +hIng fer chrIs+mAs. i wonT 2 +hInGs fer chrIs+mas. i kan+ hav a ponE B kuz i hav no warE +o pu+ i+. i won+ A doG And A ka+. i won+ A ge i jo And A +oiE kAr.

yor frEnD

mIklE

by Paul Christner

True Colors

It was Monday morning and science was my first class. I walked into the science room. We did a lab today so our teachers assigned us partners. Before they did that a new girl came into the room. She was a black girl, who looked really nice. When the teachers assigned us partners it turned out that I didn't have one so I was with Cait, the new girl.

We got together with our partners and started the lab. At first I was doing most of the work and I was getting a little angry with her, but then I remembered she was the new girl and she is shy because she doesn't know anyone. I know what it's like to be in her shoes.

We were half way through the lab and she started answering some questions. I think she started to feel a little bit more comfortable around me. There were about ten minutes of class left so Cait and I sat there and talked.

She asked, "What's your name?"

"Natalie," I said.

"What's yours?" I asked

"It's Cait," she said.

"Where are you from?" I asked.

"Chicago, my dad was transferred here," she told me.

"Where's your next class?" I asked her.

cont.-

"Language arts," she said as the bell was ringing.

"I'm going there too, let's walk together," I said.

So we walked to language arts together.

We met some of my friends in the hall and they asked who I was with. I told them her name was Cait. They said "oh" and walked away.

Cait asked, "What was that all about?"

"I don't know," I replied.

That night I called one of my friends and I asked her why they walked off when I told them about Cait. They said because she was black. I said that was no reason not to be her friend. She said that's not how they felt and she hung up.

The next day Cait and I were partners in science.

"Why did your friends walk away when you told them my name?" Cait wondered.

"I think it's because you are black," I said disappointingly.

"I know, a lot of people have been talking about me," Cait said sadly.

"That's not right," I said.

"I know, but what are you going to do about it?" Cait asked.

"I'm going to go talk to my friends," I said.

At lunch I went over to sit by my friends, but they wouldn't even talk to me. I asked them why they were so mean to Cait, but they wouldn't even answer. I kept trying to talk to them but they would just ignore me. So I just sat there and ate my lunch.

At home that night I was thinking about what happened in

cont. -

school the last couple of days. It's going to be Cait or my friends because it can't be both.

The next day everybody was saying that I wasn't acting myself. I wasn't because I had too much on my mind. In science, I couldn't concentrate on the lab questions. In spelling, I missed a lot of words because I couldn't concentrate. Even some teachers asked if I was okay. It was like I was in space. My whole day was a mess.

Today was Thursday and Cait and I were in science. We had to do another lab. Cait wasn't acting like herself today. She wouldn't answer hardly any questions.

"What's wrong Cait?" I asked.

"Nothing," she replied.

At the end of class Cait didn't wait for me so we could walk to language arts together. I wondered if I did or said something to make her mad. I didn't think I did?

At lunch I was sitting down at a table and my friends came and sat by me. They started talking to me.

"What did you do in science today?" they asked.

"A lab," I said.

"Cait isn't acting herself." I said.

"Why?" they asked.

"I don't know," I replied. "I hope it's nothing we've said or done?"

They had this weird look on their face when I said that but, I didn't think much of it.

That night at home I thought about that look. I thought that

cont.-

maybe they might have said something to Cait, but then I thought they wouldn't even talk to her.

Today was Friday and in science Cait was acting the same as she was yesterday. Something must be going on.

"Cait, are you mad at me?" I asked. She didn't answer. I thought, she's mad at me, but what for? We didn't walk to language arts again today. What did I do? The rest of the day was the same as it was yesterday. I sat by my friends again and they were acting weird again. What was going on here?

Monday morning in science I said, "Cait, you have to tell me why you're mad at me." At first she didn't say anything, but then she started to talk.

"Your friends told me that the only reason you were nice to me is because you wanted a good grade in science. You know that I'm smart and if you were nice to me you could get the answers out of me."

"Cait, you know that's not true. Why would I want a better grade in science anyway? I already have an A," I told her. Cait felt a little embarrassed. She said she was sorry. I told her that we better go talk to my friends.

Today Cait ate lunch with me and we went over to sit by my friends.

"Why did you tell Cait a lie about me?" I asked.

"We didn't," they said.

"I know all about it," I said. They were all looking down at the table.

cont. -

"We didn't like Cait because she is black," they replied.

"You shouldn't judge a person by their color. Cait is nice, helpful, smart, and fun to be with," I said strongly.

"We didn't like her because of all the black people in gangs," they replied.

"Cait isn't in a gang and just because a few black people are in gangs doesn't mean they all are," I said.

"I don't even like gangs," Cait said.

"We're sorry, Cait, for judging you by your color and not your personality, we acted like fools," they said apologetically.

They apologized to me for saying those bad things. Cait and I accepted their apologies and we said that we were all friends. Thank goodness that's over I thought in my mind. I think everyone was thinking that, too. I guess now we can all be friends.

The next weekend we all went to a movie to celebrate our friendship. We had a really good time!

by Natalie Oster

SOMEONE IN THE WOODS

"Help!! Go away from me! Go! Get out of here!!" Suddenly Sandra sat up in bed, wide awake. She listened for a sound, any sound, but she could hear nothing. "Why am I hearing all these weird sounds when there is nothing going on?" she thought to herself. Curious, she got up and opened her window to the Oregon night air. The only sound was the crickets singing their midnight song. "Oh, well. I'll just have to ignore the sounds. It's probably my imagination," and she went back to bed.

The next morning when Sandra's alarm clock screamed at 6:20 a.m., she tapped the snooze button, but she didn't get up. Fifteen minutes later she heard her grandfather coming up the stairs. He knocked on the door and said, "Sandra, it's about time you came down for breakfast. What are you doing in there?"

"Nothing," Sandra said as she forced herself to get out of bed.

"Have you been in bed this whole time? My gosh, girl! I'm getting tired of taking care of you like a baby! Can't you even get up in the morning? You are sixteen years old. You can take care of yourself! Now get downstairs for breakfast!" Sandra did as she was told. A half hour later she got a ride to school from her grandfather because she missed the bus.

At School

"Sandra! Wait up! What's the matter?" Sandra's friend Julie Mappel asked, out of breath. "You look like you didn't sleep a wink last night!"

"Oh, I'm fine, Julie. I just had to stay up a little late to study for my science test today," Sandra lied.

"Are you sure?"

"Yeah. You better go Julie, so you're not late for your class! Bye!" Sandra called as she slipped into the room just before the bell rang.

"Oh no," Sandra thought. "I can just see Mr. Campbell having a fit over Julie being late!" Sandra giggled as she thought of Mr. Campbell.

At Home

"Can you believe that new boy?" Julie asked Sandra as they got off the bus.

"Really! Talk about ugly!" Sandra responded. They headed towards her house.

"Do you think <u>anyone</u> likes him?"

Sandra dumped her school stuff in her room and then chuckled, "I doubt it!" Then she had an idea. "Hey Julie! How about we go to that place in the woods? That old treehouse we

cont. -

used to go to in second grade!"

"OK! But let's grab some chips first. And how about some mild - no, <u>hot</u> dip?"

"All right. I'll get the dip while you get the chips. They are in the pantry," Sandra said. "Are you ready, Julie?" Sandra asked after she had gotten the dip. "Let's go then!"

At the Treehouse

"Look, Sandra, there it is! I <u>told</u> you it was somewhere near that tree stump back there!"

"OK, I'm sorry! Now, let's see if the ladder is still hidden. I think we always set it in these weeds right here. Yes! Here it is! Come on and help me, Julie. When I say "3", lift it up. 1, 2, <u>3</u>!! OK, go over that way! No! To your left! Yeah. Set it down. Now let's just hope I can get it up against the tree. Uhhh! <u>All right</u>! Let's party!"

Five Minutes Later

"Gosh, I can't believe we polished off a whole bag of chips by ourselves!" Julie said.

"Me, neither!" Sandra responded. "Oh, Julie! Remember we always used to pick berries somewhere around here?"

"Yeah, but I don't think I can eat any!" Julie said.

"Well, I'm going to go look for those bushes. Are you coming, Julie?"

"I can't move an inch. Go ahead, Sandra. I'll wait here."

"OK, bye!" Sandra called as she walked away.

At the Bushes

"Here are some bushes. Gosh, these berries sure look ripe!" Sandra said to herself.

"They sure do."

"Who's there?! What do you want?" Sandra asked nervously.

"Don't worry. I won't hurt you," said the voice. Sandra shivered and didn't know if it was from the chilling breeze on her back or her chilling fear.

"This is a lot worse than my dreams!" Sandra thought. "My dreams! Oh, my gosh! Would this have anything to do with my dreams?"

To Sandra it seemed like hours later when she heard, "Sandra? Sandra, where are you? I heard you talking to someone, are you all ri-..." Julie stopped in midsentence when she saw Sandra. "What happened?! You look as if you've seen a ghost!" Everything was quiet for a moment. Then Julie asked slowly, "Sandra, what happened?"

"I s-saw, I mean I f-felt..."

"It's OK, Sandra. Go on," Julie encouraged.

"I'm fine," Sandra finally said. "I'm just hot from the sun."

cont. -

"No, Sandra. I can see that something obviously happened. Come on. You can tell me."

"No! Just leave me alone, OK?" Sandra yelled as she ran out of the woods.

Back at Home

Bang! Sandra ran into the house, letting the door slam behind her. Her grandfather yelled from the other room, "How many times do I have to tell you? Don't slam the door!"

"Sorry, Grandpa," Sandra quickly responded. She then ran upstairs and buried herself under her covers on her bed. She fell into a deep sleep with no dreams and didn't wake until the next morning.

At School

Rrrrrring! Sandra slowly walked out into the full hall. "I don't really care if I'm late for my next class," she thought. "I wish I were home watching TV. Then I wouldn't--"

"Sandra?" someone asked quietly behind her.

"Leave me alone."

"Sandra, I think we need to talk. Can I come over to your house after school?"

"No!" Sandra yelled.

"Please, Sandra. I promise you'll feel better about what's happening once you tell me. Maybe I can help in some way."

Sandra slowly turned around and looked her friend straight in the eye. "Julie, I'm fine! Now will you leave me alone?"

"But what about what happened in the woods?" Julie asked.

"That was nothing," Sandra responded.

"Come on, Sandra. I'm your best friend."

"I know, but you might not be anymore if you don't be quiet and leave me alone!" With that Sandra walked off leaving Julie standing in the middle of the hall when the bell rang.

Back at Home in Sandra's Room

"Grandpa, I'm home!" Sandra yelled when she walked into the house. There was no answer. "Grandpa?" Then she saw the note on the kitchen table. It said:

> Sandra -
> I went into town. I will be back in a half hour. Don't get into trouble!
> - Grandpa

"That's all right," Sandra thought. "Now I can hog a box of cookies without him knowing it! He doesn't eat these cookies anyway." She stuffed some in her mouth and headed up the stairs to her room. As soon as she stepped into her room, she felt it--the cold that sent a chill up her spine. The same chill she had

cont. -

felt in the woods. The chill that made her know someone had been there! She quickly looked around her room to see what this intruder had done. Everything looked fine to her. But then she looked closer at her desk. Neatly scratched into her desktop was the word H E L P in capital letters. Sandra reacted by going downstairs and calling Julie.

"Hi, Julie? This is Sandra. I'm sorry I've been so mean the past couple days. There's just been something upsetting me. Look, can you come over to my house right now?"

"Sure!" Julie answered on the other end. "I'll be right there. Bye!"

Five Minutes Later

Ding - dong.

"Hi, Julie."

"Sandra, what happened? Please tell me!"

"Julie, that's why I called you. I think I will need your help."

"OK, let's go up to your room and talk."

"No! Let's not!" Sandra quickly protested.

"Why not?" Julie asked, surprised.

"Just go in the living room and I'll explain everything," Sandra said.

"Go for it!" Julie said when she and Sandra were settled on the couch.

"Julie, this is serious. I probably shouldn't even tell you."

"I'm sorry, Sandra. Go ahead." Julie said.

"OK. Let me start from the beginning. Two months ago, I started having these weird dreams."

"What were the dreams like?" Julie interrupted.

"Well, I felt like I kept hearing someone trying to talk to me--in whispers. Anyway, that continued for quite a while, until the other day in the woods. Someone came up behind me, put his cold hand on my shoulder, and answered a question I had asked myself. But then you came, and he went away.

"Now, something else happened today. I got home from school, and I went up to my room. My room felt unusually cold. Then I looked at my desk and the word H E L P was scratched into it. Now I'm really scared. I don't know what to do. What do you think?"

Julie quietly contemplated the mystery. "Well, I think a spirit of some kind is haunting you because it needs help in some way. I think if you try to help it, it will go away."

"But how do I help it?" Sandra asked.

"I think we should go to that place in the woods where he talked to you."

"OK, but let's wait until later tonight. There would be a better chance of him being there," Sandra suggested.

cont. -

In the Woods at 11:45 that Night

"Shh! Quiet, Julie!"

"Why should I be any quieter than you?" Julie demanded.

"Because he might not want you here. Did you ever notice that things happened to me when you weren't around?"

"Yeah, maybe I should stay back here."

"No, I want you to come but just be quiet," Sandra said.

"OK. But what if--"

"Shh! I think I heard something!"

"I'll stay behind this tree," Julie whispered. Sandra nodded in agreement.

"Is that you, Sandra?" someone asked. Sandra hesitated, but after a look of encouragement from Julie, she answered, "Yes, it is."

"You answered my call. Will you help me?" the voice begged.

"I'll try. What can I do?"

"I'll tell you my story," the voice began. "My wife died in a car accident when I was still alive. I was so upset I buried my wedding ring in the garden behind the house. I died a year after my wife. Now, I can't rest in peace until I have my ring. Can you help me by uncovering it and bringing it to me?"

"Yes, I will get it. Tonight," Sandra promised.

"Thank you so very much. The ring is under the stone bench that is near the old oak tree," the voice said. "I'll just wait here until you get back."

"OK, I'll only be a little while," Sandra yelled as she left the woods. Julie quickly chased after her.

At the House

"I can't find it!" Sandra cried while digging. "I have to find it! I can't let him down!"

"Here, I'll help you," Julie said.

"Did you follow me back here?" Sandra asked.

"Of course! You didn't think I was going to stay in the woods all by myself, did you? Besides, I had to make sure you found the ring." After digging for a while longer, Sandra felt something hard. Rubbing the dirt off of it she saw that it was the ring.

"I found it!" she screamed. Then she and Julie got up and ran toward the woods.

In the Woods

"Did you find it?" the man asked.

"Yes, I did!" Sandra said excitedly as she set the ring down on the ground for him to pick up.

"Oh, thank you so much! I feel so much better now. I will leave you alone forever. Sorry if I frightened you. I understand how you might have felt. Thanks again." And with that

cont. -

the man was gone as mysteriously as he came.

"Oh, Julie, I'm so glad that's over!" Sandra exclaimed.

"I am, too," agreed Julie.

They were both very quiet as they started walking home, until Sandra said, "Julie , thank you for helping me tonight. I was pretty scared and it was nice to know that a brave friend was there with me. Thank you so much."

"You're welcome! But I wasn't that brave. Hey, I was scared, too! But at least we can tell all our friends at school that we saw a real ghost!" Julie said.

"But we didn't really see him," Sandra disagreed. "Besides. I would like to keep this a secret. I don't want the whole school knowing that we had contact with a ghost."

"Well, OK," Julie said. "See ya tomorrow!"

"OK, bye!" Sandra called back as she ran towards her house.

by Lindsay Hoffman

LEAVING

The moving van pulled away as Yvonne McKie critically looked at her new house. Yvonne, aged 12, had just moved from Canterbury, Illinois to Smallsville, Iowa. Her dad had lost his job at a power plant and their family had moved to its origins in Smallsville.

Yvonne had been very happy in her old town. She had friends, lots of clothes, a beautiful house and money. Now, though, she had nothing. Her life and joy had been left behind in Canterbury.

Even though you would think she could easily rebuild happiness, she couldn't. Yvonne's parents were having a rough time too. There was no money and the market value of their Victorian home had fallen dramatically.

When Monday morning rolled around Yvonne was very nervous. Her teeth were chattering and her palms dripping sweat. Starting a new school wasn't easy!

Yvonne's father dropped her off at Jefferson Jr. High. To Yvonne the huge building looked like a hungry monster ready to eat her, dead or alive! As she entered the building she frantically looked for some form of civilization--even a teacher or a principal would be nice!

Boom! In Yvonne's quest for civilization she hadn't realized that she was walking right into the office wall! Soon packs of girls and guys had aching sides from laughter. They had just seen a "new" kid walk head first into the main office wall!

To the other students it was hilarious, but to Yvonne it was disasterous.

cont. -

Her first impression of these kids was the fact that she was stupid. Her face turned bright red and she ran to the nearest exit.

Yvonne sat outside crying her eyes out. She felt awful, trapped and humiliated. She could never face going back to that horrid school. The thought haunted her.

A few minutes later she heard soft footsteps behind her. She looked back to see a warm smile upon a friendly face. The girl sat down beside Yvonne and stroked her tear-stained hand.

"Hi, my name's Krista, Krista Brown. Who are you?"

"Y-Y-Yvonne McKie," Yvonne said as the tears choked her usually dignified voice.

"Have you just moved here?" asked Krista.

"Yeah, I hate this school. I just hate it."

Krista calmed Yvonne down. Just talking to the hysterical girl helped. It seemed like all she needed was someone to spill her feelings out to. Her feelings had been trapped inside, ready to explode.

After the tears had been dried off and the feelings aired Yvonne and Krista went into the school to have a snack. They talked about how they were feeling. It turned out that Krista had just moved to Smallsville too! It was a great feeling to know that they weren't alone in thinking the whole world hated them.

Krista told Yvonne to talk with her family about how she was feeling. It was the only way to go. She explained that if you don't complain the "big" people will think you're fine and happy. Yvonne agreed. She

cont. -

would go straight home tonight and tell her mom and dad.

Later that night, under Krista's advice, Yvonne told her parents how she was feeling. They said there was nothing they could do. They said she was exaggerating. She didn't really need help.

Yvonne cried all that night. She felt neglected and unwanted. She decided she was going to try something else, something really different.

After some time of settling in, Yvonne and Krista decided they were going to start on Plan A. They had the facts and were ready to fight! They got together and planned their action. They were going to do something different. Neither one was very popular or happy. Neither one was easily accepted by the "in" gang. Neither one had many friends. The girls had decided to fight back and reverse these "neither ones."

To start off they were going to hit the mall hard. Their old clothes weren't going to make it in Smallsville. They bought themselves a new look. Even though they were getting new clothes for style, the new clothes made each girl feel better as a person. The fresh clothes made them feel good and that's what they needed. The question was--would the junior highers take them for a new, stylish person?

Krista stayed over with Yvonne on Sunday night. On Monday morning the girls got ready together. Styled hair and polished nails for all! Just before they left Yvonne and Krista took one last look in the mirror. They looked really great!

cont. -

As they walked up the main corridor at Jefferson Jr. HIgh, they heard snickering. Yvonne's good hearing was sure it could pick out the main words--office wall, new girl and stupid. She figured she would have to take action on Plan B. She needed more than a new look to release the students from their stupid ideas about her. She needed a new way of thinking!

At home, after finishing a mountain of homework, Yvonne thought about her actions. When people laughed at her she got embarrassed. When she forgot something she freaked out. When she tripped over something she cried. The answer to all this was--laugh!

Yvonne had been observing "popular" people in these situations. They had just laughed it off. She could do that too. She didn't need to be embarrassed! It was the same with teasing. She should just ignore it or laugh it off.

On Tuesday Yvonne shared this information with Krista. They both thought it was a very good idea. So they went ahead and tried it together.

Their results were great. Yvonne and Krista had some new friends. Lisa was in a lot of Yvonne's classes and she was really funny! Maria was shy but nice. The girls all became good friends.

Changing schools is tough, especially in junior high. When it has never happened to you, you never fully understand what it is like. Yvonne and Krista had to teach themselves how to act and to meet new people.

cont. -

Yvonne and Krista liked the "new" them. Fortunately so did the other school kids. They gained more friends. It was wonderful! Belonging--that's what they felt. It was a good feeling.

Eventually Yvonne was one of the more popular girls in school. Everybody liked her and she liked it that way. She had finally settled down, made friends and rebuilt her life.

As Yvonne walked home she thought about how great her life was now. Even her parents were getting on better than they had before. And her dad had been hinting that he had a job offer. Things were going great and Yvonne didn't even know why she had thought Smallsville was such an awful place!

"You can't, you just can't!" screamed Yvonne. She had gone home that evening to the horrible news that her family was going to move back to Canterbury! She couldn't believe it. Just when she had gotten settled in and happy, her parents were once again going to destruct her life. It was a nightmare!

All week Yvonne, Krista and their friends were moping around. Yvonne, the central figure of their gang, was moving far away. Now that was a cause for depression.

Yvonne and her family had been packing their things all week. Her father had been joking that if they moved once more they would need to buy a moving van! Yvonne hated her father's joking about serious things. She was almost in tears and he was joking about it. Fathers are awful!

At dinner the day before the McKie's were due to leave Mr. McKie had a serious tone to his voice. Mrs. McKie had a sheepish grin

cont. -

all over her face. Yvonne didn't know what to think. Could good news or bad news be coming to her family?

"Yvonne, we have some bad news for you," said her father.

Oh no, thought Yvonne.

"We've decided not to move back to Canterbury," he said.

Yvonne jumped about six inches above her chair and yelled with happiness. Her parents were puzzled, but she was overjoyed! It was the best thing that could have happened to her. She wasn't going to leave town ever again!

by Sarah Low

On the Trail Again

Mindy was sitting on her bed, tugging at her tightly braided hair, and she was thinking about life (actually dreaming) when suddenly the door flew open.

"Ahhh!" screamed Mindy.

"What?!?" yelled a familiar voice.

"Oh, it's only you!" sighed Mindy.

"Only me? Only your best friend in the whole world! Only Brandi Crawford, average citizen of..."

"Okay, okay. Don't get into that again!" pleaded Mindy. "Hi, 'Brandilon.' So how's life?"

"Fine. Now let's go on a trail ride at Hillsgrove Park. I rode King Echols over. You can ride Holy Smoke. Come on!"

"Wait a sec, Brandi. Willie's gone and my mom and dad are still on vacation, so we don't have a ride to the park."

I better explain this a little better. King Echols and Holy Smoke are Brandi's and Mindy's horses, respectively. Willie is Mindy's hired hand.

"Great. Now what are we going to do?" wailed Brandi.

"I don't know. You're the smart one."

"Oh, yea! Blame it on the intelligence. I know! Let's ride over to the park, then we'll rest awhile. Afterwards, we'll go on a trail ride."

"I dunno. Sounds kind of risky. Anyway, what about the interstate? It's six lanes! We'd never get across it," emphasized Mindy.

"Oh sure we could. Remember, I'm a genius. I'll think of something. Meanwhile, you sit back and relax," she laughed.

"Okay, O' Mighty Genius, you, what's your plan?" asked Mindy.

"Relax, I'm thinking. Mmmmm," hummed Brandi. "I know! It's crazy..."

"You are crazy!" interrupted Mindy.

"AS I was saying, it's crazy, but it just may work! You..."

Well they thought out the plan. It was crazy, but Mindy couldn't refuse this bizarre adventure. Then they were off, Mindy on Holy Smoke and Brandi on King Echols.

Mindy got off to open the gate. Usually she did this while on the horse's back, but the gate was latched at the bottom.

"Let's race up that hill," whooped Brandi.

"Brandi," grunted Mindy as she tugged herself on the saddle, "you know better than that. We have a long way the way it is."

"Whatever. Hey! Ya know what I just thought about? We're going to have to go all the way around the cornfield."

"It'll probably be past supper before we get back!" exclaimed Mindy.

"Yea, but it will still be light out."

"True."

They were just going up the second hill at this point. The sun was like a big, ripe, red cherry blocking their way.

"Hey, Babe," called Brandi, "did you know there's going to be a lunar eclipse tomorrow?"

cont. -

"No, and don't call me 'Babe' anymore. I hate that!" cried Mindy.

"Fine, fine."

"Ya wanna canter? I know what I said before, but we might as well get the friskiness out of them now," said Mindy.

"Okay! Let's go, King!" Just as Brandi nudged King Echols into a canter, he kicked up his back legs. Brandi flew off her horse. Mindy couldn't stop laughing.

"Stupid horse!" exclaimed Brandi.

King Echols was staring at like he was saying, "Whatcha doin' down there?'"

Brandi finally gave up and started laughing. Holy Smoke started to whinny.

"See, even Holy Smoke's laughing at you!" laughed Mindy.

"Shut up," joked Brandi.

"Come on we're almost to the cornfield. After that the interstate. Brandi, do you really want to do this?"

"Sure, why not?"

"Oh, never mind. Let's go!"

They took off on a brisk canter. King Echols was still a bit frisky, but Brandi was ready for him this time.

"Min, don't let the farmer see you. You know how he is. 'Get out of here ya little rugrats,'" said Brandi trying to imitate the hump-backed old timer.

"That's pretty good. He's very ornery," exclaimed Mindy. "'Kids, kids. Dang nabit.'"

They bursted out laughing. They were rounding the corner of the cornfield. The interstate could barely be seen across that quarter mile of grass.

"I can't believe we're doing this! What happens if we get hit?" asked Mindy.

"We die. Come on! Don't lose hope with the 'Brandilon' around!"

"That's what I'm afraid of!" sighed Mindy.

By now they were walking their horses. The sun was practically above them.

"What time is it, Brandi?" questioned Mindy.

Brandi glanced at her horse watch. It had a picture of the magnificent quarter horse King, who she had named her horse after.

"It's about ten o'clock," informed Brandi.

"We've been riding for about an hour, wouldn't you say?" inquired Mindy.

"Well, I got to your house around eight thirty. We got the horses ready by quarter after. I'd say about forty- five minutes."

"Whatever!!! How long do you want to rest? It will be about lunch time when we get to the park, so we can eat there."

"Did you even bring us lunches?"

"Yea. I made them while you were on the phone persuading your mom to let you come."

"Okay. I'd say around half an hour to forty- five minutes," estimated Brandi.

"Okay. The trail ride itself is two hours. We can rest

cont. -

another half hour. It'll take us about two hours for the ride home," Mindy thought out loud. "I'd say we'd get home about five o'clock, give or take a half hour. That's a lot earlier than I expected."

"Yea!"

The horses were snorting from the thick exhaust filling their nostrils They could feel the tension rising with every step they took.

Holy Smoke was calm because he was old and trained for these kind of things. King Echols, on the other hand was throwing a tissy fit.

They had stopped about fifty yards from the interstate. The cars were zooming by as if there was no tomorrow. The horses were becoming delirious

"Here we go!" shivered Brandi. "Remember our plan?"

"You realize crying, 'Help', and warning the cars to stop is a stupid idea, don't you?"

"Yea," proudly said Brandi.

"Who knows. Maybe they'll stop anyways."

"Here goes..." Brandi didn't have time to finish her sentence because right then and there a rude truck driver honked and King Echols started booking. He just took off at lightning speed. Unaware of Brandi's pleading him to stop, King Echols went straight onto the interstate.

Meanwhile, on the sidelines, Mindy was speechless. The only word uttered from her stone lips was "Help!" Otherwise, her mouth was too dry and her eyes were in a dead stare.

Out of pure luck, King Echols was able to blindly find holes in the traffic here and there. Cars began slamming on their brakes with ear-piercing screeches. That spooked King Echols even more.

Mindy finally regained consciousness and started screaming at Brandi. Without Mindy realizing it, Holy Smoke was edging towards the six lanes of traffic which had come to a halt. They went across the interstate at a slow walk. Staring at the pathway of cars, who were staring at them.

When Mindy reached the grassy median that divided the interstate, she began to look for Brandi.

She finally found her on the other side trembling all over. Brandi was waving to Mindy to hurry up.

"Are you okay?" she wanted to cry, but she didn't want to feel like an idiot.

"Hurry up. Out of the way. Come on ya old sow and hee-haw," were all the rude remarks Mindy heard from the drivers.

Finally she reached the other side.

"Are you okay?" urgently asked Mindy as the traffic picked up again.

"I'm as okay as you are human!" laughed Brandi.

"Well, at least you're back to your old self again."

"Yea, but I never want to do that again."

"What about going home?"

"We'll hitch a ride!" said Brandi. "Just kidding! Couldn't Willie pick us up?"

"He'll be upset, but he should be home. Now off to the

cont.-

park!"

They went to the park jabbering about the previous incident.

Brandi took the lead as they headed towards the park. It was only a five minute ride from where they were.

When they arrived at the park they had a little surprise.

"Whoa, Baby! It's packed!" cried Brandi.

"Oh, no! We forgot all about the American Quarter Horse Association's Annual Summer Trail Ride!" wailed Mindy.

"Well, let's join the crowd. They'll never notice. There's too many people here," suggested Brandi.

"Okay, fine with me... Wait a sec! Isn't that Willie?"

"It is. Great, now we'll have a ride home."

"What'll we say? What'll HE say?"

"We'll tell him the truth. He'll yell and scream, but he'll get over it. Willie's pretty nice," consoled Brandi.

"Whatever. Come on! Hey, Willie! Wait up!"

"What are you guys doing here? How did you get here?" questioned Willie suspiciously.

"We'll explain later. Let's go on a trail ride!" yelled Brandi.

The long train of horses swiveled like a snake in and out of trees. Brandi gave Mindy a funny look as they headed off into the dense woods.

Now I would say they lived happily ever after, but whose to say that King Echols doesn't try the same stunt again?

"Whoa, King!"

by Sara Stear

Today's Teens Look Toward the Future

"We are the World, we are the children," the song says and in my opinion that is one of the most meaningful things ever written in a song. The teens are the world, without them twenty-five years from now where would we be?

Teens need to have a more positive attitude towards school and life. I think that if they did there wouldn't be half as many gangs and violence that there is today or if a girl wants to take shop and a boy wants to take Home Ec they can. We are a very civilized country. And who got us this far? The teens did. At one time President Clinton was a teen and he decided he wanted to be a leader and today he is just that, a leader.

Teens need to prepare for the future now. If they don't start looking towards the future and more than half said they expected to do the same or better than their parents do. To me that shows that we don't just want to be average, we want to lead.

I think the United States is a great place for teens to grow up because we have freedom. That means if a woman wants to be a doctor or a man wants to be a nurse they can. Teens can't be strong in the future without help. Teachers, parents, and other adults need to help educate the teens not only in academics but to be better friends and someday a better husband or wife and parent.

I think today's teens are looking towards the future quite a bit. In a recent Channel One poll teens were asked how they expect to do in the future today then tomorrow won't be very bright. I know I've said this once but we are the world, we are the teens of the best country in the world, the United States of America!

by Randi Paulsen

Response to "Mr. Wendal"

Mr. Wendal is poor,
he don't got no door,
and I mean this ain't funny,
cause he don't got no money.
Mr. Wendal is such a Bum
that he can't get no bubble gum.
If Mr. Wendal yelps
no one will come to help.
Mr. Wendal ain't a munster
but he eats out of a dumpster.
Mr. Wendal's skin is black
and for this he takes a lot of flack.
Mr. Wendal isn't dumb,
but Mr. Wendal is a bum.
Mr. Wendal don't play in a band,
but more important he got no land.

by Chris Stubbe

The Hospital

There it was.
Bright orange in the sun.
Do I have to go in there grandmother? I ask.
Yes you do. You have a new sister, was the response.
A new sister? WOW! Why didn't you tell me?
Let's go in! I said.
I step through the door.
Anxiety takes over.
What am I doing here?
I don't want to be here!
I find myself in the elevator.
Next to me is a guy in a wheelchair,
And someone who is blind.
Is that going to happen to me?
I thought.
You're here to see your sister,
You know.
You can't be thinking
You're going to end up like them,
On a visit to see your sister.
Mom! Wow! You look good.
I thought NOT!!!
There she is.
My only sister.
What's her name?
Jessica.
My new sister,
Jessica.
Now I have a brother,
And a sister.
The happiest day of my life!
What was that, again?
No, I didn't have any trouble
Coming in the hospital.

Nikki Allen

A Homeless Man's Home

He sits,
by the waters calm,
listens to the winds tender melodies.
He watches
the humming bires.
fly free in the air.
He tells
his friends a story.
it has many endings
The leaves
on the trees
listen in, too.
The grass
of the earth
hugs him as he lays
No home
to go.
but friends
he has
The river,
the grass,
the trees,
the flowers,
the rocks
are his friends,
they are his home.
They listen
carefully,
and very unjudgingly
His clothes
are rags
but his friends don't see that
They tell him
of stories
that are a key

cont. -

to our future.
He listens,
patiently,
as people walk by
and stare.
The strangers
see a disgrace.
uncivilized,
unhuman thing
The man:
he sees a true,
understanding,
wonderful thing.
He sees
his home.

by Cathyrn Chereck
Brandy Riley
Janelle Claussen

The Unwanted

They're all over living on the streets
with no where to go and nothing to eat
When we look at them we turn up our nose
we don't realize they have no home or clothes
we don't appreciate them in any way
we laugh and joke about them day by day
they sleep on the floor
they sleep at our door
they don't choose to live like they do
Like us they have dreams and goals too.
We picture them as being dumb
Just because they have a life like a bum
they don't want to feel like geeks
It's not right to call they freaks
We treat them like outcasts
And when we walk by them we go rathrer fast
Why do we choose to be so mean
Just because they aren't as clean
I hope this all doesn't last
And we can put it all in the past

Written for all the homeless
by Natasha Brooks & Holly Regan

How The Trip to Reegal's Changed My Life

This story is dedicated
to all the little kids that don't eat their vegetable.

The car jerked to a stop in front of Reegal's Supermarket, but I didn't get out. I hate going to the store! I told my mom that if she made me go in she'd be sorry!

"Jimmy, come on already!" she declared as she opened the car door.

I moped out of the car and into the supermarket. Little did I know that I wouldn't come out the same little six year old Jimmy.

My mom dragged me through the soup aisle, the cereal aisle, the aisle where the laundry detergents are, the dairy section and the meat section. This was definitely not my cup of tea!

"Are we almost done yet?" I asked impatiently.

"Almost, we have one more spot left to cover. It's the vegetable section."

"Aw, mom, do we have to? I hate vegetables, what do we have to get those for?!"

"To keep you healthy, that's why!"

"I can't stand vegetables, there is no way that I'm going to eat them!"

As we entered the west side of the store with green leafy vegetables, to orange orange and brown ones, I began to quiver! I noticed a strangeness about the vegetables. They looked angry or something. Maybe it was just me, after all I was a little tired!

I was lagging behind my mom until I began to feel little thumps against the back of my legs. I looked down only to see my legs being bombarded by carrots, brussel sprouts, and little cherry tomatoes.

"Ouch!" I cried in pain and shock, for I didn't see a

cont. -

source from which these objects came.

As I was collecting my mind and muscles so that I could run to my mom and get out of this awful place, I saw and heard something that no one else will believe. With mad faces and red eyes all the vegetables stated in unison, "Jimmy, you better eat your vegetables!!"

I got a chill right down to the bone and ran to my mom.

"Let's get out of here!" I shouted. I ran all the way through the checkout counter. I was being so careless that I didn't notice the big potato on the floor until I tripped over it. I landed right on my elbow. I winced with pain and through my tears I saw one of the potatoe's big brown eyes wink at me.

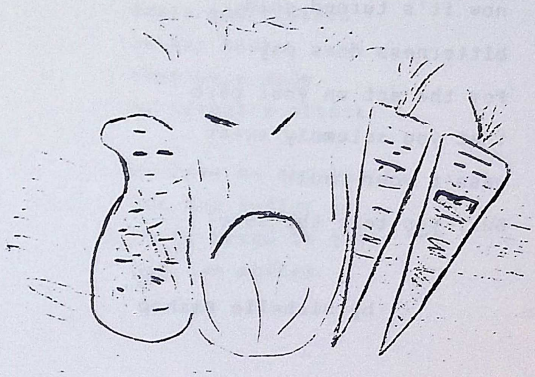
My mom took me to the hospital only for me to find out that I had a broken elbow.

As my mom and I were talking to the doctor I got one final shiver.

"You know that summer is nearing and you'll have to eat larger quantities of vegetables!"

The moral of the story is:
EAT YOUR VEGETABLES!

by Katie Rashid



Scarred

Walk in the light
so I can see your face
that was taken and scarred
in that automobile race
The foolish act
taken on your part
burned your soul
and scarred your heart
You're no longer the same
I can see that
your scalp is burned
hidden by your hat
your mind cries in anger
everyday that you live
your soul cries out in sorrow
only it could give
your heart was taken
on that sorrowful day
now it's turned cold
bitterness does pay
For the act on your part
that you solemnly swear
wasn't your fault
But, you took the dare!

by Michelle Bishop

Untitled

She wanted to die
and take her life
She lived a lie
in pain and strife

She took a gun
up to her head
He checked her pulse
and she was dead

She lay there silent
staring in space
blood surrounding her
messed up face

She had everything
why did she suffer
no one knew
except for her brother

He was deaf
but wasn't blind
he saw everything
that was not kind

Scars and bruises
on her back
that were made
by father's attack

He knew he shouldn't
let her suffer
so he tried to tell
his own mother

cont. -

She couldn't believe him
didn't understand
how the person who did this
was her own man

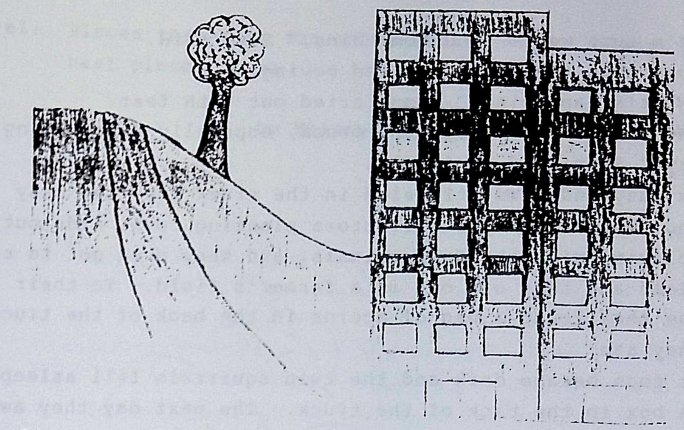
This is a story
put on the shelf
left untold
to tell itself

With other people
In other lives
killing children
telling lies

The fire burns
deep within
telling people
of this sin

by Michelle Bishop

The Trip Into the City



It was a warm, sunny, April day deep in Squirrel Country. Suzy Squirrel and Sammy Squirrel were sitting in their home eating acorns and wondering what they should do.

"We could go swimming in Old Man Harper's pond," said Sammy.

"Don't you remember what happened last time? We got caught and were chased all the way home by his dog!" Suzy exclaimed.

"Well, what do you think we should do?" Sammy asked.

"I know, let's go somewhere very big and exciting where we've never been before," said Suzy.

"Where would that be? The only thing big and exciting in the country is the supermarket and you know we can't go in there," Sammy said.

"No, I'm talking about the city!" Suzy squealed with excitment in her voice.

"That sounds like a great idea! Let's start getting ready," Sammy said.

The next morning they got up bright and early and began on their long journey to the city.

Along the journey they discovered many new and exciting

cont. -

things. The first day they left, they jumped on a truck looking for some acorns to eat.

"I hope we can find something, I'm really hungry," said Sammy.

"I'm sure we'll find something," Suzy said.

Just then the truck started moving.

"What's happening!" Sammy cried out with fear.

"We're just moving in the truck, hopefully he is going to the city," Suzy said excitedly.

As Suzy and Sammy traveled in the truck they saw many exciting things. They saw tractors planting corn, kids out in yards playing with the farm animals, and they even got to see a plane land and take off out in a farmer's field. To their surprise they found a bag of acorns in the back of the truck that they ate.

It soon became dark and the twin squirrels fell asleep under a box in the back of the truck. The next day they awoke to many noises.

"Where are we?" Sammy questioned.

"We're in the city!" Suzy cried with glee.

"Come on, let's go and explore," said Sammy.

As they went exploring they discovered it wasn't very easy to get around as an animal in a big city. They could hardly go anywhere without almost getting hit by a car and it was very difficult to find food in this big city. On top of all that it was very noisy. Unlike the peace and quiet of the country. they also couldn't run and play together like they could in the country.

That night they decided they didn't want to stay in the city.

"I don't like it here, let's go back home," Suzy said.

"I agree," said Sammy.

The next morning they got in the truck they came in hoping it would go back to the country.

They overheard a conversation between two people and found out that the man who drove the truck worked in the country, so they knew they were on their way home.

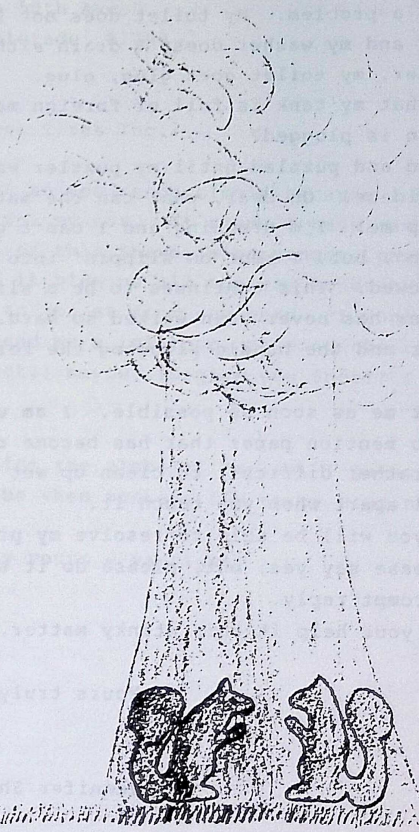
That afternoon as the twins sat in their quiet, peaceful

cont. -

house, Suzy said to Sammy, "The city is a nice place for people, but nothing can get better for an animal than the peace and quiet of the country."

Moral: Places that seem fun and exciting aren't always the best places to be.

by Melany Moeller



21285 Scott Park Road
Davenport, IA 52804
April 24, 1993

O'Dee's Septic Service
P.O. Box 603
East Moline, IL 61244

Dear Sir:

Recently you came to my house to pump my septic tank. I still seem to have a problem. My toilet does not flush, my sinks don't drain, and my washer doesn't drain either. Whenever I run water, my toilet goes glug, glug.

Could it be that my tank is full of foreign matter? Could it be that my drain is plugged?

I have puzzled and puzzled until my puzzler was sore. I am running out of ideas. Oh dear, what can the matter be? Please, please help me! I'm drowning and I can't get out. I've taken a lickin', but, I kept on slippin' into the toilet water as it overflowed. This continues to be a slightly sticky problem. My plunger has never been worked so hard. I have worn out the rubber and the handle plunging the foreign matter down the drain.

Please contact me as soon as possible. I am up to my neck in problems, not to mention paper that has become rather wet and slimy. It is rather difficult to clean up wet toilet paper as it seems to fall apart when you touch it.

Do you think you will be able to resolve my problem in a timely manner? Please say yes, but, please do it soon. I am waiting for your prompt reply.

Thank you for your help in this stinky matter.

Yours truly,

Jennifer Shipley

1121 Nth 29th Road
Podunk, Iowa 58472.9
Octomay - 58 10, 109, 210, 578.9

Goodweek Tires Inc.
90210.7 Sth 50th Ave.
Roanoke, Colorado 01209

Dear Goodweek Tires Inc.:

I am writing to you respectively because I have bought some of your tires for my car. It seems I have ran over a marshmallow and because of this Shawn, a passenger, passed gas and my car blew up and it blew us all the way to Uranus, which is where I am writing to you at from now here. I would be very pleased if you would send me a lollipop, make it cherry and I would totally, (not!) maybe, forgive you (not!) I spose, o.k., o.k. (not)!

So, thanks for the globe of Jupiter I guess. See ya later (not!), maybe when monkeys fly up my dogs nostrils!

Respectively yours - ya right!

Josh Hamann

20874 270th St.
Eldridge, I|A 52748
April 21, 1993

Ronald McDonald & Friends
Medical Institute for People with Big Red Shoes
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Dear Ronald McDonald:

I would first like to point out the fact that I don't think you're qualified for the job that you have. I mean when all the little kiddies want to come up and play with you they always trip over your big red shoes and skin their knees and then they don't like you anymore.

The second thing I want to point out to you is that you're really messed up. First of all you're whiter than Michael Jackson and I thought nobody could be that white. What also bothers me is that your best friend, Grimmace, is a purple whatchamacallit and that your girl friend is a bird that can't fly and you also have neighbors called fry guys with major afros. But what bugs me the most is that you have a name that rhymes. Were your parents odd? Please try to fix some of these problems.

Sincerely,

Eric D. Langan

A Pet for Paul

Dedicated to anyone who's ever wanted a pet!

This is Paul, he is in the 1st grade, and is 6 years old. Today Paul is at the zoo with his grandma. Paul loves animals. At the zoo he sees lions, tigers, and really big elephants.

When Paul got home he was very excited. He thought animals were great and he wanted one. But, what kind of animal should he get? A dog, a cat, a hamster, a fish, there were so many choices! But after two whole days he decided he wanted a dog!!

Paul went downstairs to his dad's office. "Dad, I was just wondering, could I have a dog?" Paul asked as he entered the room.

"What?" his dad said looking up from his computer. "Why do you all of a sudden want a dog?"

"Because I want a pet."

"Well, okay, we'll see just be patient for now."

"Okay," Paul said, "but I need a dog," he added.

Paul's birthday came and he had a party with all of his friends and there was a big box from his parents. Paul was very happy. He knew it was a dog, therefore, when they were done eating cake he ran to that present first.

"No, Paul, open your friends' present first," she said, "Then you may open the big box."

"Okay, Mom," Paul said like he could hardly resist.

He opened the other kids' presents as fast as he could without seeming rude.

Then he was ready. All the presents had been opened, except the BIG box. He ran over and ripped the paper off as fast as he could. Then he opened the box and looked inside. It was . . . a book! Paul couldn't believe it, his parents knew he wanted a dog. How could they give him a darn book!

Paul was so mad he didn't even pick up the book. He just

cont. -

kicked the box and ran up the stairs, but when he opened the door to his bedroom he couldn't believe it, his grandma was sitting on the bed with A DOG! A little black one with a white stomach. It was beautiful. This was the happiest day of his life. He hugged his grandma, then his mom and dad.

The rest of the party was great and he named his dog Buddy because he knew that they would be buddies.

The End

The moral of this story is:
Be patient and have faith.

by Pete Uitenbroek

The Trouble With Samson

This story is dedicated to my sister Amanda who is also in kindergarten and my other sister Ashley for the idea of Arf.

It was a warm August morning in 1992. It was going to be Janine's first day of school. Her first day of kindergarten for that matter. She was excited and scared. She was afraid nobody in her class would want to talk to her. Even though she had gone in last week to meet her teacher did tell her that she loved little girls with blonde hair and blue eyes. She still didn't know what it would be like with all the other kids there with her and her stuffed bear Samson. Her older neighbor had told her the day before that no one would want to talk to her, if she brought Samson along.

Janine wasn't sure, so she went to ask her older brother Davey. It wasn't his first day of school at all. He was lucky to be able to go back to a place he knew with his friends. He was about to start 3rd grade.

When she walked in, he was combing his light brown hair the best he could at his age. She asked him, "Will the other kids want to talk to me if I bring Samson to schol with me?"

Davey answered, "Yes, they will. Why are you up if you don't go to school until after lunch?"

Janine felt a little better, but she still had another question, "Davey, would you walk home with me if I had Samson along with me?"

Davey looked at her and said, "No way Jani, I would not want to be seen with you and your brown furball!"

Just then their mother walked in and said, "Davey, you'll walk her home if I say so! She can put Samson in her bag if it'll make you happy!"

Janie looked worried, "No, you can't put him in my bag! He'll die! He's afraid of the dark!"

cont. -

Davey joined in, "He's not a real bear! He can't die when he wasn't ever alive!"

Mother added, "That's enough Dave. Here, let me comb your hair for you. There, now go eat your breakfast or you'll be late for school. You have five minutes if you want to make it on time walking. You'll just have to eat it cold."

In about seven minutes Davey left and Janine finally had a chance to ask her mom about kindergarten.

"Mommy, were you scared when you went to school?"

"Well Janine, I think everyone is, but after awhile, you'll be making friends so fast."

Janine said, "Davey said he won't walk with me if I bring Samson along."

"Well, don't worry about Davey. He didn't get over his stuffed dog, Arf, until kindergarten either."

"Really?"

"Really. He didn't want to leave it home so he brought it to school and people still talked to him, but they only asked about Arf and not him, so he started to leave Arf home after awhile. When Arf stayed home, Davey had a much better time at school."

"Wow!"

"Well, I think you'd better get ready for school. Wear the outfit we picked out last night."

"Okay."

"I'll go fix your lunch."

In awhile, she was at school and she did bring Samson. She couldn't let Davey know she knew about Arf.

She wanted to see if she brought him or left him home, if they'd pay more attention to her one way and less in another. She was worried all the time, because the other kids would just look at her and not talk.

When her teacher came over by Janine and asked her how she was doing, she said, "Good, but nobody will talk to me."

"Oh, that's all right, they're all scared, too," her

cont. -

teacher said, "Let's go talk to Johanna Smith. She's the girl over there in the polkadot dress. I'll introduce you and from there, you two will do the rest." They walked across the room to the finger paints.

"Hi, Johanna, this is Janine Johnson."

"Hi, Johanna, this is my stuffed bear Samson."

"Oh, he's so cute Janine!"

For the rest of the afternoon, Johanna and Janine walked around introducing Samson to everyone.

It sort of made Janine feel bad because Johanna never said her name again. She only talked about Samson as if Janine were'nt there at all.

When Janine got home, Davey was already there, eating carrot sticks and watching Tom & Jerry. She said, "Davey, how come you didn't wait and walk with me?"

"Oh, I forgot!"

"Mom, Davey forgot to come and get me!"

"Okay, so I didn't forget. I just didn't want to have my friends see my with you and your dumb bear!"

"Samson is not dumb!"

"Yes, he is and if you yell one more time, I'll rip his head off and throw it in the trash, then you will be sorry!"

Now Janine was mad, "Davey, don't throw Sammy away. You can't! I'll tell all your dumb friends about your doggie Arf!"

"Mom, you told her about Arf! Now Jani knows why I don't want her to have a dumb toy at school!"

"All right you two, calm down," their mother said.

"Sit down and we can talk about this, and I mean now."

The children obediently sat. "Okay, Davey, you don't want her to take Samson to school. Why?"

"It reminds me of when I was in kindergarten and then I feel stupid because I needed a toy to make me feel safer."

"Mom, it does make you feel better, but I think I'll leave Samson home. Then if there's trouble Davey can help me. If Sammy was there, Davey can help me. If Sammy was there, Davey

cont. -

wouldn't be. A big brother is better than a toy."

"That's right. I'm sorry I threatened to throw him away. I still have Arf even if I don't need him at school. Just knowing he's in my room is good enough for me."

"Yeah and I can play with Sammy when I get home. Then I know I have something good at home when I get there.

"Like something to look forward to. Good agreement guys. Now please go outside and have a good time. I need you out of the way so I can get supper on the table before your father gets home. Besides, there's only a few more of these nice days to be expected in Greenbush, Wisconsin before it gets cold."

"Okay, mom," they said.

"Janine, you go on, I have to talk to mom."

"All right, Davey," she said and left.

"Mom, thanks for telling her about Arf, I mean, I think it helped her see how it can be better to leave Samson home than to take him."

"You're welcome Davey, now go out and ride your bike or something. Stay on this block and watch Jani."

"Okay, mom."

Moral:

The moral of my story is that although it may be safer to have a real person's help than a toy, and to solve a problem of security with toys, you shouldn't threaten to throw them away.

by Angela Barber

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